

# LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

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For EIGHT DOLLARS, remitted directly to the Publishers, the LIVING AGE will be punctually forwarded for a year, free of postage.

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Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

## A SUMMER REQUIEM.

SPIRIT of summer ! thou whose honeyed sweets  
Ne'er fail fulfilment of their promise fair ;  
Thou at whose smile earth's odorous voices  
rise,  
To fill with balmy breath the gladdened air ;  
Where are thy songs, thy melodies, thy lays,  
That cheered our weary hearts, and soothed  
our pain ?

Silent thy music now, thy songsters fled,  
And nothing but their memories remain ;  
Faded thy blossoms, all thy buds decayed,  
While hollow winds moan sadly through thy  
bowers.

Yet though thy smiling gardens bloom no  
more,

We'll not forget the perfume of thy flowers.  
Gone are thy cloudless days ; thy happy skies  
Are dim and tearful now 'neath winter's frown ;  
Disrobed thy trees, as the last dying leaves  
From naked boughs come slowly fluttering  
down.

How sad to wander through thy sodden woods,  
Gray with a brooding mist, damp with decay,  
Where summer's leaves lie rotting at our feet,  
Or by the chilly blast are borne away.

Now faint the scent of dead and dying plants ;  
Now clings the fungus to the humid stone,  
And croaks the frog from yonder weedy marsh,  
For all the woodland happiness is gone.

If on the blackened stems some wintry ray  
Athwart should fall and linger there awhile,  
'Twould be but as the echo of a song,  
The shadow of a once familiar smile.

Our brightest joys are ever quickest fled,  
As fade the rainbow colors in the sky ;  
We do not prize our happiness enough ;  
We scarcely feel it as it passes by.

Through looking always for some joy un-  
known,

To-day must ever incomplete remain,  
And not till past, we know how sweet it was.  
Spirit of summer, visit us again !

Chambers' Journal.

## THE MILKY WAY.

HER name Salami was, his Zulamylth ;  
And each so loved, each other loved. Thus  
runs the tender myth :

That once on earth they lived, and, loving  
there,  
Were wrenched apart by night, and sorrow,  
and despair ;

And when death came at last, with white  
wings given,  
Condemned to live apart, each reached a  
separate heaven.

. . . . .

Yet loving still upon the azure height,  
Across unmeasured ways of splendor, gleam-  
ing bright,  
With worlds on worlds that spread and glowed  
and burned,  
Each unto each, with love that knew no limit,  
longing turned.

Zulamylth half consumed, until he willed  
Out of his strength one night a bridge of light  
to build  
Across the waste — and lo ! from her far sun,  
A bridge of light from orb to orb Salami had  
begun.

A thousand years they built, still on, with  
faith,  
Immeasurable, quenchless, so my legend saith,  
Until the winter street of light — a bridge  
Above heaven's highest vault swung clear, re-  
motest ridge from ridge.

Fear seized the cherubim ; to God they  
spake —  
"See what amongst thy works, Almighty,  
these can make !" —  
God smiled, and smiling, lit the spheres with  
joy —  
"What in my world love builds," he said,  
"shall I, shall Love itself destroy ?"

Translated from Torpelius. E. KEARY.

## ROSES.

## (A VILANELLE.)

THERE are roses white, there are roses red,  
Shyly rosy, tenderly white ;  
Which shall I choose to wreath my head ?

Which shall I cull from the garden-bed  
To greet my love on this very night ?  
There are roses white, there are roses red.

The red should say what I would have said ;  
Ah ! how they blush in the evening light !  
Which shall I choose to wreath my head ?

The white are pale as the snow new-spread,  
Pure as young eyes and half as bright :  
There are roses white, there are roses red.

Roses white, from the heaven dew-fed,  
Roses red for a passion's plight,  
Which shall I choose to wreath my head ?

Summer twilight is almost fled,  
Say, dear love ! have I chosen right ?  
There are roses white, there are roses red.  
All twined together to wreath my head.  
Spectator. L. S. BEVINGTON.

From Blackwood's Magazine.  
NEWSPAPER OFFICES.

WE have already devoted an article to journalists, yet it seems to us that, scarcely touching on the former ground, there is much that may be interesting to be said of the modern newspaper office in its mechanical rather than its intellectual aspects; although it is true that the two are so closely connected, that it is difficult to treat the one without allusion to the other. Setting aside the growing influence of journalism, and the leverage it exercises on our political system, one of the leading newspaper establishments, regarded simply as a manufactory, leaves ordinary trade enterprise immeasurably behind it in the perfection of its methods and the precision of its organization. Nowhere, not even in the well-drilled ranks of the German army, is there such admirable discipline among the motley corps of workers, from the personal staff of the director-in-chief down to the "devils," who are the grimy counterparts of the drummer boys. And necessarily so; because the perfection of the mechanism is being perpetually tested under the most trying conditions: the slightest hitch betrays itself instantaneously, since it gives a shake or a shock to some part of the system; and alertness is maintained by the sharp penalties of censure, fine, or summary dismissal. The never-ending work is being done against time; everybody depends upon everybody else; while delays are dangerous and might be fatal. Where efficiency is in question money is disregarded; and duplicate sets of costly machinery make total collapse a practical impossibility.

It is that essential element of economy of time that makes the manufactory so exceptionally wonderful. Time must mean money in all branches of business; and public carrying companies in particular undertake certain responsibilities to their customers which may be enforced by actions for heavy damages. But if a cotton mill or an iron forge have to slacken or suspend operations, it is the concern of nobody but the owner, and nobody else need be the wiser. He cal-

culates his loss, writes it off and liquidates it, and he may even hope to weather a prolonged strike. As for the great railway companies, who should be bound to be punctual before everything, we know how they play fast and loose with their passengers. City trains crowded with impetuous business men may be delayed habitually morning after morning; and save on some exceptional occasion that proves the rule, the discontent is thrown off in harmless grumbling. The excuse is tacitly admitted that, in the unavoidable complication of traffic, speed must be habitually sacrificed to safety. With the newspaper, excuses and apologies are inadmissible. The work must be done somehow, and thoroughly well done to the moment. The earth might as soon come to a stop on its axis, as a daily journal fail to fulfil those conditions of its existence, which must recur at the identical hours on six days out of the seven. The work to all intents and purposes is ceaseless; and what work it is! In other factories the expenditure of intellect and inventive power is capitalized once and for all; thenceforward simple mechanists can draw the revenues in the shape of waggon-loads of raw material, dexterously manipulated by the machinery they set in motion. In the newspaper office the raw material is the impalpable essence of active brains. There is no filling capacious magazines beforehand, with those reserves that prudence would recommend. The bulk of the nightly supplies must be provided on the spur of the moment; and what seems marvelously to resemble inspiration must be summoned and sustained by an effort of the will. Sometimes there may be no lack of sensational matter and a superabundance of themes for the leading articles. But at other times the bricks must be made without straw; and the public is the most inexorable of taskmasters. The given space must be filled somehow; and filled in a manner that must parody productions under more favorable circumstances. Happily the mass of readers are not over critical; and a fluent style with well-sounding periods may be made to do duty for sense and substance. But the

keeping a newspaper to the mark in the depths of the dead season is what really strikes the initiated with admiration. It is then that the fancy comes into play; that the men whose department of the literary profession is popularly supposed to be most prosaic, show resources and an adaptability that approach almost to genius. Under circumstances when a Tennyson or a Victor Hugo would fold their arms in despair, they rise to a sense of their responsibilities and answer unflinching to the spur.

Looked at merely in its financial aspects, journalistic enterprise nowadays throws most other trade enterprises in the shade. Nowhere is competition more intense or more *entrainant*; for a single speculator who is foolishly lavish may force his rivals to follow his example in spite of themselves. It may be clear, for instance, to a cool-headed man, that no possible general increase of circulation can recoup some new and extravagant arrangement for telegrams. But it is equally evident that the journal adopting it would, in the mean time, get such a start of its contemporaries as they cannot afford to allow. At the same time similar considerations cut the other way; and, at least in England and America, the position of the well-established papers is yearly becoming less assailable by upstarts. If they have expended enormously, they are entering into the enjoyment of their harvest; they have engaged their talent and asserted their popularity; old friendships and familiar associations are in their favor. Above all, they have practically the monopoly of the advertisements; and, in this advertising age, that advantage is incalculable. We have heard it estimated that the daily receipts of the *Times* on that account must amount to something like £1000 *per diem*; and, for ourselves, we are inclined to believe that the estimate is near the mark. Conceive the strength of such a position against possible competitors, with self-confidence, a well-tested organization and almost immemorial supremacy thrown in. So far as cheap issues and an immense circulation can go, the field has already been effectually occupied; and the penny papers have

placed themselves in positions where, beyond their constantly liberal outlay, they need never stint occasional expenditure. Rather than let a rival take the wind out of the sails, it would pay them to suspend their profits, or even to publish for a time at a loss. The public would gain, and the rival would be ruined; even if he had the purse of a Rothschild with the enterprise of a Strousberg. We do not say that a new London journal might not make its way in time; we see, indeed, how the *Clerkenwell News* has been coming to the front as the *Daily Chronicle*—and the prize of lucrative popularity is so great that we can conceive the attempt being made on a fitting opportunity arising. We happen to know that it has been seriously contemplated of late, and that a powerful combination of Liberal Conservative capitalists had put down their names for a magnificent sum total, and were even casting about for a suitable editor. But as the project seems to have been abandoned or indefinitely deferred, we may fairly conclude that, as shrewd men of business, they were discouraged by the prospect, and doubted of success. Theirs would at first have been weary work, and admirably fitted to develop patience and hope in gentlemen who disliked to lie out of their money. For even the influence they aspire to exercise would be dependent on pecuniary success; and they would have to want alike for the one and the other.

The bare expenses of premises, plant, and start, would be something enormous. In the old times of the heavy government stamp-duty and the light stage-coaches, a prosperous paper thought it matter of congratulation when its circulation had reached some few thousand copies. Now the *Times* with its enormous bulk of matter may sell some eighty or ninety thousand numbers; while the penny journal with "the greatest circulation in the world," used to prove, on the authority of independent auditors, that its daily issue was more than double that by many thousands. Each year they need more space and elbow room; for although manual labor is being economized by improved machinery, yet the development of busi-



ness is constant, since the world grows bigger every day. Under the old system, the newspaper office was something more than unpretending. Situated up a back street, or in some sequestered court, it seemed to typify the *incognito* that was guarded by the writers. Above the cellars in the basement where the machinery was at work, everything showed a sublime disregard of appearances. As likely as not, the editorial *sanctum* was as cheerless a den as the fancy could picture. Roomy enough, but scantily carpeted, there was nothing in the surroundings to aid inspiration by the genial sense of a well-earned *bien-être*. The gas-smoke of many a year had begrimed the walls and the ceilings. The bookcases contained the back files of the journal; and piles of blue-books, manuscripts, and papers lay heaped against the ink-splashed skirting-boards. Nothing but an inveterate habit of self-abstraction could have made work of any kind even possible. The editor, no doubt, was always an autocrat. He ordered his people about as he pleased, and could dismiss a delinquent peremptorily for any reason or no reason. But ceremonial of any kind was conspicuous by its absence; and so far as serene contemplation was concerned, the Olympus of the editorial Jove—a favorite metaphor—was really the wildest figure of speech. The leader-writers, who had to scribble in any odd corner, often did their work at side-tables under the editorial eye. The rickety floors and the ill-fitting doors hardly deadened the harsh babel of mingling sounds. There was a perpetual coming and going upon the creaking staircases: there was a stamping and pattering of feet overhead; and a rattling of carts and swearing of drivers in the narrow street under the windows.

Now all that is being changed; though England has been moving more slowly than other countries, and not a few of the established London journals still cling to the old localities. Yet even these have been extending themselves, annexing neighboring house property, while the fashion of the day all over Europe and the United States is setting decidedly towards mounting the establishments with a due

regard to their position. As it would be set down to parsimony instead of prudence, if a man in London society, with £20,000 a year, had his mansion in Bloomsbury in place of Belgravia; so it is evident that a journal with a princely revenue and professing to influence the decisions of Cabinets and inspire the minds of the constituencies, ought not to be lodged like the mechanic who struggles to keep his soul in his body. The editor, who should have the *entrée* of the best political society, and go to dinners and receptions in the best houses, ought not to find himself altogether *dépaysé* when he withdraws to the scene of his nightly labors: and the class of contributors he relies upon nowadays do not care to submit to be housed like convicts. Besides, in journalism as in everything else, it is become profitable to make a show by way of advertisement; and to a prosperous *parvenu* in particular, show is almost indispensable. The example was set first across the Atlantic, where the dollars that were quickly made were lightly spent, and where the go-ahead population are caught by advertisements, and disposed to judge of merit by appearances.

In the architectural display of modern New York, there are no more imposing *façades* than those of the leading newspaper offices—the *Herald*, the *Times*, and the *Tribune*. Berlin has been renewing itself altogether of late years, and Vienna caught the infection in the universal fever of building speculation which precipitated the panic and crash of 1866. Paris had lagged behind, strangely enough; though the reason of her backwardness is doubtless to be found in the facility with which journals are started and abandoned there, and the extraordinary economy with which they may be conducted. The possession of a very few thousand francs and some trifling credit, is encouragement enough for some ambitious *café* politician to start an "organ" and try his luck. While as the sheet is small at best, and the news of the day is generally represented by a straggling column or so of *faits divers*—and as the reports of law proceedings and public meetings are summarily condensed when

they are not ignored — the whole of the working staff can be housed in an ordinary *étage*.

Paris editors take their professional duties easily. Many of the most conspicuous of them have always been active politicians, probably with seats in the Chamber, and with other irons in the fire. They press their opinions in the signed contributions which may one day be the stepping-stones to high office. As they object to evening work for many reasons, it is hard to get a suitable man to edit a morning journal; and accordingly most of the papers of the French capital appear in the afternoon. His most intimate friends would mistrust their senses if they met a London editor in a ball-room after midnight. While in Paris it is the chief part of an editor's business to show himself everywhere in a certain society — to attend the receptions of the ministers or opposition leaders as the case may be; and to drop in, besides, at the unofficial *réunions* where his political friends are in the habit of rallying. He has probably a liking for society for its own sake, and it is at once his pleasure and his duty to feel the pulse of society for himself, in place of trusting, like his English *confrère*, to the second-hand reports of intimates who are mixing in the world at any rate. Then he need never have the sense of working at high pressure. Far more often than not he writes on the domestic subjects which are always in his mind; and when he has occasion to treat some sudden question of foreign policy, he does so deliberately after ripe consideration. The minor contents of his meagre sheet demand comparatively little supervision, and that little may be confided to intelligent subordinates. With the exception of the *Temps*, there are few Parisian papers that take any great trouble about their foreign correspondence; and the sum total of the mechanical labor must of course be proportionately small.

There was no great need, then, for a French journal to have extensive premises, nor has it been the fashion with them to go in for luxurious accommodation. Many of the most distinguished press men have made fortunes, like M. Girardin, and are in the habit of writing in their own sumptuous mansions; others, like M. Gambetta, had furnished a suite of apartments over the office of the paper by which they lived. It was reserved for the late proprietor of the *Figaro* to build and furnish, by way of advertisement, with characteristic spirit. M. Villemes-

sant's tact and business capacity gained him, with very good reason, the absolute confidence of his shareholders, and they gave him *carte blanche* accordingly. He was a heaven-born editor — for his Paris world — if ever there was one; and the story of how he floated his infant speculation is very significant of the man and the journal. It is worth repeating for those who may never have heard it, and we believe it has the undoubted merit of being true. The incident occurred some five-and-twenty years ago at the Café de Mulhouse, on the Boulevard Montmartre. Two men met by appointment for breakfast one morning, — M. Dollingen, who had just founded the *Figaro*, and M. Villemessant, his partner. Dollingen was in the very worst of humors. His venture threatened to be a lamentable *fiasco*. "*Ca ne va pas?*" asked Villemessant, lightly; "you are sure of that?" "So sure," replied the other, "that I would make over my share." "For a mess of pottage, as Esau sold his birthright. Very well," Villemessant went on; "here are witnesses, I'll do better for you. I'll give you a couple of *louis*, and pay for the breakfast." He threw down the two *louis* on the table, as the Baron of Brankesome flung the purse of gold to Earl Morton; the bargain was made then and there: and never perhaps has so small a sum yielded such handsome returns. Villemessant knew precisely what would "fetch" the Parisian public. He had clever writers, who wrote much as they pleased within certain understood limits: they signed the articles and took the responsibility for them. His journal, always conservative, and written with a certain tone of good society — though it can be broad enough and even coarse upon occasion — was religious, frivolous, and earnest by turns, the frivolity of course greatly preponderating. Villemessant turned it into a joint-stock company, found ample funds, invested the capital to excellent advantage, and used all those means to push his circulation by way of prizes to the *clientèle*, etc., in which the French have shown themselves singularly inventive. Now the *Figaro* prints over sixty-seven thousand copies — eighty thousand on the day when it appears with a supplement. The circulation is enormous for a French three-sous paper, especially when compared with that of its ablest competitors, such as the *Débats* or the *Temps*.

Accordingly, the *Figaro* must have far more space, and can afford to house

its *employés* in a style that is beyond the means of its more serious rivals. Its new premises are handsome though fantastic, and the immortal barber stands over the grand entrance, the emblem of the gossiping journalism within doors. The Moorish architecture, with the horse-shoe arches, came from the country of *Figaro*, the presiding genius; and the *façade* has been modelled apparently after the Alcazar of his native town. Everything within and above has been devised to catch the eye, — the spacious staircase with its gilded balustrades; the moulded and embossed ceilings and cornices; the paintings on the walls and the frescoes in the panels. The clerks in the outer *bureaux* are comfortably established in lofty and well-lighted apartments. There is a very handsome vestibule or waiting-room, such as you see in the mansion of leading foreign bankers, with heavy Aubusson carpet and luxurious settees and lounging-chairs. The editorial quarters leave nothing to desire, and the contributors are comfortably quartered in the upper floors, removed alike from the bustle of the office and the noises in the thoroughfare. No money has been spared in appointments that seem as substantial as they are showy; yet, after all, if you are familiar with the great London offices, you are struck with the modest scale of the arrangements. The office of the Parisian journal which, with the exception of the *sous* papers, has by far "the largest circulation," is established between the basement and the attics of a single house in the Rue Drouot — a corner house, to be sure; and when you dive beneath the ground-floor into the cellars, where the mechanical business of the publication is conducted, the sense of surprise and disappointment grows on you. When you are told that there are two hundred persons employed, from the editor downwards — though outdoor messengers and distributors are included in these — you are puzzled as to how and where they can be accommodated. The printing-presses stand in a darkened chamber with no great amount of elbow-room between them, and the damping of the webs of paper is done by separate machines. Of course, the managers of the *Figaro* thoroughly understand their business; and had additional outlay seemed advisable, no doubt they would have incurred it. The fact is that they *do* understand their business, and so they make a gorgeous show above board; while the mechanical operations which go on out of sight are

really in very moderate compass, and can be managed in a comparatively easy-going way. But in the extent of its profits, enterprise, and *clientèle*, as in its tone, the *Figaro* is a representative Paris journal; and we can hardly best contrast the comparative magnitude of journalistic enterprise in the French and English capitals than by transporting ourselves straight from the Rue Drouot to the premises of the *Times* in Printing House Square.

We have alluded already to the rough-and-ready manner in which most of the London journals used to get through their work. The compositors had to set the types in an unwholesome atmosphere, which became almost pestilential as the night went on. The "readers," in particular, were much to be pitied, — men who had to keep their intellects on the stretch as they read the proofs of every variety of subject, knowing that they would be held primarily responsible for a mistake that might change the entire meaning of an article. They had to strain the eyes by flaring gaslight, with a bustle going on around them that became intolerable to the aching brain. Habit counts for a good deal, no doubt; but anybody who has tried night-journalism once in a way, can tell how hard it is to recruit the exhausted energies, or summon refreshing sleep at will, when you only lay your head on your pillow as the small hours of the morning are far advanced. The rank and file of the printing establishment suffered in their several degrees; and they had only the very doubtful consolation that the editor and his assistants were little better off. Though many of the London journals still stick, for obvious reasons, to the old localities, and though we must remember the value of each foot of frontage between St. Clement Danes and Ludgate Hill; yet there has been marvellous improvement of late years in that most insalubrious state of things. Naturally the *Times*, with its irrepressible enterprise and its practically inexhaustible resources, has taken the lead. And in summing up the circumstances which establish its ascendancy, it is no light matter to take into account the exceptional advantages it offers to work-people. In the new buildings, the occupations of printers and machinists are made agreeable instead of being perpetual misery. Though a man may submit to much for the sake of good wages, yet he must necessarily throw far more heart into his

work if he can feel light and cheerful in the present and look forward hopefully to the future, — if he knows he has a fair chance of longevity, and ceases to have immediate reasons for seeing to his subscriptions to his burial club. The pay in the *Times* office is lavish rather than liberal, because the conductors refuse to be fettered by the tyranny of trade-unions. Of course the working hands of a daily paper can bring awkward pressure to bear on their employers; and more than once in bygone days the managers of the *Times* had unpleasant experience of that. Now they decline to have any one in their service who owes any allegiance to anybody out of doors. Accordingly, the men are doubly bound over to diligence and good behavior, since they are fully alive to the consequences of dismissal, and are assured that zeal will lead to advancement.

In the course of the last few years the *Times* has been entirely reconstructing its premises, yet never has the slightest hitch in its publishing arrangements given notice to the public of the transformation going on. And that is a most remarkable fact, when we consider the very delicate adjustment of the complicated parts of the gigantic machinery. The new buildings are now approaching completion. The office had gradually been outgrowing accommodation, which had been amply sufficient till comparatively lately. The old premises, which had been altered and irregularly added to in the course of generations of progress, were necessarily deficient in light and air. Printing House Square was a lofty and rather gloomy block of buildings, squeezed up by the courts that were crowded around it, and approached by narrow alleys or passages. It reminded one of a vast rabbit-burrow, with its beaten runs and its bolting-holes, where the inmates and their numerous visitors were perpetually popping out and in. The first event that disturbed the sequestered activity of the spot, was the arrival of the subversive "Chatham and Dover," at their new terminus on Ludgate Hill. There were extensive demolitions to make way for that hideous structure; and some neighbors had warning who might very well be spared: yet these changes on the whole were hardly for the better. The noise of the frequent trains, and the tremor they communicated to the adjacent premises, introduced a fresh element of disturbance, and were anything but soothing to excited nerves. However, the directors and writers of the *Times* got

used to that, as to many other *désagréments*; and a more recent metropolitan improvement has proved of immense benefit to them. The Thames Embankment and Queen Victoria Street opened them up a magnificent approach, worthy the establishment of the greatest journal in the world. The main entrance used to be by a modest door, on the north side of the cramped quadrangle and within it; where you passed under the memorial tablet that had been placed over the key-stone by the gratitude of the commercial community of London. The inscription commemorates the exposure of a grand swindling conspiracy, due to the energy and public spirit of the *Times*, on an occasion when the journal is supposed to have saved the city sums that came little short of a million. The present entrance is from Queen Victoria Street; the door is in the *façade* of a handsome building, which, imposing as it is, gives no conception of the great extent of the premises behind. Everything connected with the reconstruction has been planned and superintended by Mr. Walter in person, merely assisted by a clerk of the works; and there can be no doubt he did a very wise thing in deciding to become his own architect. Mere professional knowledge could hardly have mastered the many wants that had to be efficiently provided for; and the new arrangements, in their most trivial details, show an intimate acquaintance with the working of the paper. The very bricks for the building, by the way, were brought from brick-fields at Bearwood, in Berkshire, — another proof of the self-sufficiency of a journal — using the word self-sufficiency in its literal sense — which makes everything for itself, from its machinery downwards, ink and paper only excepted.

Entering and ascending a flight of steps, you glance through the glass doors on the right into the vast hall of advertisements. Though that is the department which really makes the profits of the paper, we shall pass it by in the mean time, and go up to the first floor. The first floor is given over entirely to the editorial and directing staff; and these gentlemen have no reason to complain of being indifferently quartered nowadays. They can sit through the watches of the night, in spacious and airy rooms; and should they care to turn from prose to poetry, they have only to throw their windows open, and gaze out upon the bosom of the river, reflecting the stars or the gas-lamps. But much of the work on that

floor is done in the daytime; that in the manager's apartment, for example, which is the central point and pivot of the whole machine; and again at the farther end of the passage, where the city editor goes through his labors methodically, with the help of the clerks in an antechamber. One cannot help moralizing on the amount of damaging information that passes into the city editor's sanctuary, in the shape of communications more or less well authenticated. There are seeds for a whole crop of actions for libel in the slips on the files, and under his paper-weights! The names of tottering firms may be read on a black list, supplied by somebody who professes to be behind the scenes; with those of the banks that are understood to be bolstering them, whose shareholders have an unsuspected stake in their stability. These are the communications the editor dare not publish, however useful they may be for his private guidance in estimating the course of trade and the probable tendencies of the stock-markets. That by the way, however; and passing on to the floors above, many of whose rooms are silent during the day, as they are assigned to the contributors who come on duty in the evening, we mount to a chamber under the roof. The arrangements there are still uncompleted; in the mean time there is a conspicuous absence of furniture, though the walls are fitted with bookshelves. In fact we are in a well-lighted library, which should be as pleasant a lounge as any in London for literary gentlemen of gossiping tastes. It is made fire-proof, as it ought to be, since it contains a treasure which could only be replaced by reprinting from duplicates in the British Museum. Here you see all the files of the paper, beginning with July 1796, — the earlier volumes, with those of the *Daily Register*, the title under which the *Times* made its appearance for the two first years of its existence, being at Bearwood. Turning to the early pages, you come on the intelligence of the morning in bulletins from the battlefields of Lodi and Castiglione; on reports of the French fleet in Bantry Bay; of the excitement in city circles when the bank suspended cash payments, and the bankers and merchants were holding meetings of confidence. There were advertisements, too, in those days, and some eligible "country properties" in the market, in localities that have long since been swallowed in the suburbs. That room is the one spot in the premises where the genius of intellectual indolence might be

supposed to find a congenial retreat, and we are only sorry that we have no time to linger there.

Coming down the flight of stairs that leads to it, we are in the full swing of modern invention. We enter the telegraph room at the end of the corridor. A special wire from Paris is retained nightly from nine o'clock to three in the morning. From Paris regular connection is secured with Berlin and Vienna, and each of these capitals is a centre for the collection of news. Thus intelligence from St. Petersburg arrives by way of Berlin, while the transmitting agency in the Kaiserstadt is no sinecure, with the multifarious reports that are always coming in from the numerous correspondents in south-eastern Europe. Each Sunday night a special wire is engaged from India. During the hours that the Continental telegraph is kept at work, it can turn out from six and a half to seven columns. The transmission is effected by synchronous machine, — that in Printing House Square being an exact duplicate of the instrument in Paris. The operator plays upon a set of keys like those of a piano; and nothing can be simpler or more rapid than the manipulation when one is used to it. Thus, as the French operator sets his finger on the key marked *f*, straightway an *f* is printed in London on the strip of narrow ribbon that is passing through the machine. As the message runs swiftly off upon the ribbon, the operator dictates from it sentence by sentence to a workman who is seated at the composing-machine hard by. The composing-machine in some respects looks not unlike the telegraphic instrument; is almost as easily worked, and quite as ingenious. It also has its set of keys stamped with letters. Behind these keys, on what would be the upright face of a small cottage piano, is a shield-shaped assortment of converging brass tubes. Each of these tubes forms a channel connecting a reserve tube behind with a little compartment, arranged for the reception of a particular letter. Thus, on touching the key marked *a*, an *a* drops to the action of a lever. Fast as the letters are released and received, they are arranged into uninterrupted rows of words, and passed to a boy at the elbow of the compositor, who breaks them up into lines, and adjusts them for the columns. The machine gives warning to a workman stationed at the back when the supply of any letter is being exhausted; and the empty tube is replaced by another.



Nearly one half of the news-work in the office is done by the composing-machine; hand-composing being still retained for the rest, since it gives some greater facilities for correction. In a corner of the corridor on the floor allotted to the contributors, you remark another useful improvement. Adjusted in a table are the *embouchures* of a double pneumatic tube, communicating directly with the composing-room in a block of buildings to the back. In the engine-room are the pair of twin cylinders that suck and blow, pump and exhaust. By means of these pneumatic tubes, all hand-carrying is dispensed with, which diminishes labor and the chances of mistakes, and dispenses with a great deal of noise and scurry. After a certain hour, a lad takes his seat by the table, whose charge it is to receive and transmit the manuscript which is to be exchanged for the proofs.

A short passage leading into the composing-hall connects the front buildings, where the intellect of the journal is housed, with the mechanical departments. In the composing-hall you see the types being distributed and arranged by boys, to fill the fifteen hundred reserve tubes that are daily required for the use of the composing-machines. And there you see the composing-machines at work, the operator seated with his strip of copy fixed before him, playing on the keys of the instrument with practised fingers. And there are the busy groups of workmen standing at their frames, setting up the copy from cases containing types distributed in compartments on the old system. In a corner of the room are the telegraphic instruments that communicate with the Houses of Parliament and Reuter's office. You may ask a question or verify a fact; and learn in a second or two the stoppage of a debate or the result of a division.

In the old-fashioned offices, as we remarked already, the readers had to read as they could in odd corners. Here they have their high desks, with very sufficient intervals between, in a well-ventilated apartment; and although sixteen of them may be engaged simultaneously, each with his boy droning away at his ear, no one need disturb the others. The reporters have equally commodious quarters, where they extend the pages of crabbed hieroglyphics from their notebooks by the light of carefully shaded lamps. But provision is made for the comfort of everybody, and the three hundred *employés* of the paper enjoy many of

the advantages of an admirably managed club. Off one of the corridors behind the composing-rooms is the cloak-room, where each of the men has his own compartment where he keeps a change of boots and stockings, with a peg to hang up his hat and overcoat. There is a refectory hall, with long tables, where they can call for what they want at any hour, the provisions being served at cost price. Beer is the only exception, which is sold at publicans' rates. And close to the canteen is the kitchen, where the *chef* in his white cap and apron is busy with his *aides* over the patent cooking-ranges; and there are sculleries and larders and convenient cellars with the barrels of beer for present consumption. The body of workmen are formed into a corporation, and you read the formal style of the "Times Companionship" engraved on the pewter pots and flagons.

Retracing your steps on your way to the printing-presses, you may inspect the very ingenious type-casting machine. It has been found that it is somewhat more economical to cast fresh types than to redistribute the old ones. They are cast, of course, letter by letter. The boiling metal from the reservoir behind is forced in a jet into the matrix in a little box receiving the moulds, that are exchangeable at pleasure. Each letter, as it drops fresh from the mould, falls into its place in a metal gallery, whence it is taken to be arranged in the tubes for the composing-machines. But the central object of interest is the "Walter Press,"—the heart and pulse of the whole establishment. It would be rash to predict limits to the progress of invention; yet it would really seem that in all essentials the Walter press must have come near to perfection, since, working up to the extreme power of machinery, it does all that could be asked of the most careful hand-labor, even down to folding the papers for delivery. The time may come when they will be put in wrappers and addressed; but these, after all, would be merely minor points. And yet we are warned that there may be surprises in store for the future, by turning back to an announcement of the *Times* in 1814, when it first betook itself to printing by steam. Then, after explaining the working of the new masterpieces, it proceeds with natural pride and self-gratification: "And the whole of these complicated acts is performed with such a velocity and simultaneousness of movement, that no less than eleven hundred sheets are im-



pressed in one hour." Eleven hundred sheets, though only printed on one of their sides, were no doubt a marvellous achievement compared with any previous performances of hand-printing. But now each of the Walter presses throws off in the hour nearly thirteen thousand sheets, completely printed on both sides. There are machines in use elsewhere, and notably in some of the great American offices, that nominally print a far greater number. These, however, are in reality duplicate ones, working with double sets of cylinders; and they must be attended to besides by some skilled workmen. The beauty of the *Times* machine is, that it dispenses with skilled labor altogether; intellect having once devised and elaborated it, has left nearly all the rest to steam and iron. One man can overlook a pair of these self-acting machines, with a couple of boys to each, to remove the papers. So that, putting rapidity of production out of the question, it is obvious that there is an enormous saving in wages. The four ponderous machines which the Walter press superseded were each tended by sixteen or eighteen hands, who had to do extremely delicate work, being paid of course in proportion. With the multiplicity of workmen, some check or complication might occur at any time, and it is a marvel that mishaps did not happen more frequently. With the Walter press, which is of course regularly inspected, an accident of any kind is wellnigh impossible.

The introduction of the system of rotary cylinders has wrought a great revolution in printing and publishing; and the Walter press is the perfection of that idea. Twenty years ago the best machines of the time consisted of rollers passing with a forward and retrograde motion over types arranged upon a level surface, so that quick production was out of the question. The rotary Hoe's machines were an immense advance upon these; for the types now formed the segment of a large cylinder, on which the sheets were pressed by a succession of smaller cylinders. But as the machine was fed by hand, the motion was regulated by the adroitness and activity of the feeder, who, from his stand behind a pile of paper, pushed a sheet between the cylinder at each revolution. What the projectors of the Walter machine desired to do was, to construct a machine that should supply itself without any possibility of mistakes in the adjustment; and in that case, of

course, it would have to undertake the damping, cutting, and distributing as well. The main problem was how to pass a continuous web of paper between rollers covered with the stereotyped plates that must be exactly semicircular. The ground had been so far prepared by the introduction of the stereotype process for the purpose of multiplying the "forms:" the "form," we may explain, is a page of types, firmly screwed and wedged together, and ready for the printing. The beginning was made by casting single columns, and taking off their impressions in a matrix of *papier-maché*. Subsequently the inventors succeeded in taking the *papier-maché* mould from the entire page at a single operation. The experiments which effected the adaptation of the stereotype to the curve of the old drum commenced in 1856, when the Crimean war had given an impulse to the demand for the paper; but it was two years before the process was completed. The chief delays may be said to have arisen from some insignificant difficulties that apparently were to be easily surmounted; but indeed the whole history of the development of the machine shows that patience is almost as indispensable to the inventor as genius. The experiments at last had ended so far in complete success: these curved plates answered their purpose admirably, being melted down after use for fresh impressions; but it did not follow that they could be cast with such nicety as to fit upon rollers that were absolutely circular. Then there was the question of turning them out quickly, and the damping and cutting arrangements had to be considered; and the paper-makers were to be taken into consultation as to supplying the necessary webs of paper. It was in 1863 that the construction of the Walter press was begun in earnest; and it is to be remarked that the inventors were so confident of ultimate success, though fully alive to the difficulties that might delay them, that they went to work on the complicated machine as a whole, in place of putting it together by experiments piecemeal. In the course of 1866 the various ideas may be said to have taken practical shape. In 1868, Mr. Walter having fairly tested the new machine, decided finally on absolutely adopting the system; and in 1869 the more cumbrous Hoe and Applegarth presses were entirely superseded by the new invention. The original cost of the change must have been very serious, though no doubt the speculation soon

repaid itself. After all, it could hardly be called speculation; for the capabilities of the new machines had been carefully tried in secret before it was decided to trust everything to them, where a breakdown of any kind must have been more than embarrassing. There is a curious memorial, by the way, of the long and patient labors on which the future of journalism so largely depended, in the shape of an old pillar which is still left standing, while everything on the premises about it has been cleared away and rebuilt. The pillar marks what was originally a kitchen, but which was subsequently transformed into the workshop, where the machine of 1866 took shape and form. Of course there have been various improvements since those days. But they have been merely modifications, adapted to the original machine, which is still ready as ever for regular work; and the curious visitor may trace most of the changes by holes bored in the framework, whence bolts and rivets have been withdrawn.

Talking of the memorial pillar and the original machine, we are recalled back to our stroll through the office from our digression upon the principles of the "Walter perfecting press." Leaving the type-casting machine we had been looking at, we descend into a chamber devoted to the stereotyping. In one corner is a kind of trap-door communicating directly with the composing-rooms above. Through that the page of type is lowered, set on a perfectly flat surface, and firmly secured with screws and wedges. In the stereotyping-room it is placed upon an iron table, when a thick sheet of plies of damp *papier-maché* is pressed down upon it under ponderous rollers. The *papier-maché* having received the imprint, is dried by being squeezed a second time under a press on a metal surface, which is heated by steam to a very high temperature. The paper dries fast, while the pressure smooths out accidental inequalities. Then the dried page of *papier-maché*, which is the perfect counterpart of the raised type, having been previously carefully pared and trimmed, is slipped into a cylindrical mould shaped so as to cast the semicircular stereotyped plate. The page is placed face upwards, the edges being secured by bands of metal, which regulate the required thickness of the cast. On these a counterpart of the mould is lowered by a crane suspended above them, when the page of *papier-maché* becomes the lining of a semicircular chamber. The boiling metal is poured into the mould, which,

having been previously turned up on end, is left for a few seconds to set; the lining of the mould is lifted by the crane, the sheet of *papier-maché* is stripped off, and the mould, with the cast firmly adhering, is swung round and dropped into a second chamber of similar shape and dimensions to that from which it was taken. The plate has to be planed within, so that there may be no irregularities in the printing; and it is finally cut and trimmed at the edges. Then you see a half-cylinder of glistening white metal, carved with clear-cut characters, and perfectly ready for use. Nothing, by the way, gave the inventor more trouble than devising a satisfactory system of planing, and it cost him two years of assiduous experiment before he solved the problem successfully. There are six of these casting-machines arranged in a circle; and we may add that the matrix of *papier-maché* — which, except for a slight discoloring of the surface, shows no sign of its contact with the boiling metal — may be used for impressions again and again. It takes some time to give even a rough idea in writing of what sounds like a series of tedious operations. But in reality the regulation time allowed, from handing the type-form down from the composing-room to having the stereotype ready to transfer to the printing-press, is only ten minutes. When the journal runs to twenty pages, as is not unfrequently the case, no less than one hundred and twenty plates must be cast in course of the night. Those for the outer sheets are disposed of first — six sets being made for the six machines, which have generally done the first part of their work by two o'clock, or shortly after. Six sets or forty-eight plates are used for the inner sheet, which must be printed against time, and goes to press at the eleventh hour.

At one side of the stereotyping-rooms works the electrotypist, who prepares the daily charts of the weather, the maps of campaigning operations, etc. On our way to the printing department we may look in on the engine-room, where are a pair of twin engines by Penn & Son of twenty-five horse-power each, with another of sixty horse-power. In the spacious printing-room stand eight presses. Six of these are in ordinary use; but the whole eight are brought into play on the nights when the "weekly edition" is published. Taking one of them, we shall attempt the rather difficult task of giving an intelligible idea of its wonderful arrangements, in language as little techni-

cal as possible. A continuous web of paper, weighing eight hundred pounds, rather over four miles in length, and good for fifty-five hundred average copies of the journal, is mounted on a small roller. The paper is then passed from the web over a tension-roller, when it is drawn over a couple of damping-cylinders — the saturation being completed by the pressure of a second pair of rollers. The damping, which is done in most offices by machinery apart, is equally simple and effective. The first pair of cylinders are hollow and covered with blankets. Steam passes in at the ends through small pipes, and is distributed by means of centrifugal force through an infinite number of minute perforations. Any inequality of drag on the paper, as it is carried over the damping-cylinders, is obviated by the catch of a couple of small rollers, which also relieve the printing surface from the strain of pulling it along. Now the paper is ready for the printing. Four great cylinders are adjusted in a vertical plane, one above the other. To the uppermost and lowermost are attached the stereotyped printing-plates, while the intermediate pair are merely for pressing, and are covered, as in other machines, with blanket. The paper is led between the upper printing and the upper pressing cylinders, receiving in its passage the impression on one side. Next, it is passed between the pressing cylinders, and afterwards between the lower pressing and the lower printing cylinders, and this time the impression on the reverse side is completed.

The next step is to cut the printed *Times* roll into separate copies. It is drawn forward out of the press by tapes, which lead it on to what is called the rock-frame; but on its way it has to go through the ordeal of the cutting-cylinders. As the dividing space of blank margin between each copy passes, in about the fourth of a second, through these cutting-cylinders, a serrated knife shoots down from the upper cylinder into a reception-groove in the lower. The sheet is severed, but not entirely. A scrap of the paper is left uncut at either end, so that each copy, instead of leaving the rest in the lurch, draws its successor into the clutch of the tapes. When fairly in the tapes, it is seized in a tiny pair of rollers, revolving rather faster than the rest of the machinery. The extra tension snaps the retaining tags, — the newspaper is dragged by the tapes up a sharply inclined plane, whence it shoots down a

perpendicular oscillating frame, swinging to alternate sides, and delivering copies alternately on either hand from a "flyer," or set of fingers. But the paper, before being delivered by the machine, may be actually folded. And as many of the news-agents prefer to have their copies unfolded, and as the folder cannot be used for the extra half-sheet with which the *Times* very frequently appears, the "folders" may be attached or detached at will. We say "folders," because they are in duplicate, as a single instrument would obviously be unable to keep pace with the rapidity of the rest of the machinery. When the folders are to be used, the flyer is disengaged; and the folders are run forward on wheels into its place. Then the swing-frame throws the sheets into either pair of folders by turns. The sheet on leaving the frame is laid by the tapes along a table. Across the table there runs a slit; beneath the slit are a pair of rollers, and above it is a paper-knife. As the middle of the sheet is brought over the slit, the knife comes down, forcing the paper into the rollers, and giving it fold the first. Fold the second is effected by a second knife, adjusted at right angles to the former, sending the sheet between a second pair of rollers. The third and fourth plies are accomplished by similar operations, when the folded journal is dropped into the box that is placed below in readiness to receive it.

In short, the marvel is, as we remarked already, that literally each delicate step in a process that used to task the constant assiduity of the most practised workmen is left entirely to machinery, — and to machinery that with ordinary care can hardly get out of order. The *Times*, as its inventor says, "is now printed at the rate of more than seventy thousand copies per hour — i.e., in less than half the time, and with one-fifth the number of hands required by the fastest and best printing-machines previously in use."

When it was decided in 1862 to attempt the construction of this "perfecting" and perfected machine, it was settled at the same time that all the engineering work should be done on the premises in Printing House Square. That involved the establishing of a shop fitted with the necessary appliances; and latterly the work has been carried on there on an ever-increasing scale. The *Times* not merely makes its own presses, but all its casting-machines, composing-machines, etc., as well. Not only so, but it under-

takes to supply its competitors whenever they choose to come to it. We believe that the first order came from the directors of the *Scotsman*, who set up two Walter presses in their offices in 1872. At present the *Scotsman* employs three, the *Daily News* six, the *New York Times* three; the *Birmingham Daily Post*, the *Glasgow News*, and the *Vienna Presse*, two each; the *Missouri Republican* and the *Magdeburg Zeitung* one each.

The papers when delivered from the flyers of the folding-machines are run off in trucks to the publishing department: there they are hoisted in lifts to an upper room, where they are assorted in packages for the morning trains; and those packages are shot down through shafts to the carts and wagons in waiting below. On the floor of this room are the tables where copies are made up and addressed to the customers who order them direct from headquarters; while in a room beyond is a counter for issues to town agents. Those morning trains, by the way, get earlier and earlier, so that the papers reach stations in the midlands and north in time to be laid on the breakfast tables of men of business; and Mr. W. H. Smith, like the Post Office authorities, has his own sorting travelling vans. Accelerated publication had become indispensable if the London journals were to hold their own in the country districts with their provincial rivals in these days of the telegraph. The *Times* now goes to press with its inner sheet at 3.45, and the publication ends about 5.15; and thus, in any case, the orations of the later speakers, when debates in the House are carried into the small hours, must be condensed rather unceremoniously.

The premises are in course of being lighted by electricity, and when the arrangements are completed, there will be twenty lights. At present there are six in the printing-room; and the apparatus employed are lamps by Rapiëff and a "Gramme-Dynamo-Magnetic;" the lighting being under the superintendence of Mr. Rapiëff himself, who carries on his most interesting experiments on the premises. There you may see how heat is converted into motion, and motion reconverted into heat and light.

The advertisement-hall, with the rows of clerks seated at the long parallel counters, and the range of windows looking out on Queen Victoria Street, remind you of the interior of one of the modern joint-stock banks, except that it

is far more commodious than most of these. And it well may be so, without guessing at particulars, which are private property. Nothing can show more forcibly the disinterested public spirit with which the great journal has always been conducted, than the spirited conduct of the managers during the great railway mania. According to an article which appeared twenty years ago in the *Quarterly Review*, the advertisements of the *Times* had risen, for the four weeks of October 1845, to the unprecedented average of nearly £6,500. They must have gone on increasing till the inevitable crash, which might have been indefinitely deferred under favoring circumstances,—for ready pens were diffusely eloquent, as in the prospectus of the famous Glenmutchkin Railway, and the specious promises were vindicated by paragraphs of unimpeachable statistics. Some of the morning journals gave a return for each advertisement in the form of a puff—direct or indirect; a kind of unholy bargaining which, we are sorry to say, has hardly gone altogether out of date at present. The *Times* had only to be silent and neutral, and its columns must still have been overcrowded, as the most influential medium of publicity. But while making money far beyond all former precedent, it set itself nobly to stem the current which was hurrying hundreds of thousands of frenzied enthusiasts towards their ruin. Before the mania appeared to have reached its height, it set itself steadily to write it down; and day after day, in vigorous leading articles, warned the infatuated victims of the coming collapse. Its conduct was as effective as it was self-sacrificing. In a single week, in the beginning of November, the value of the advertisements had fallen to one-half; and the *Times* could write retrospectively with a clear conscience when panic had succeeded to insane over-confidence.

We have adverted to the unrivalled position of a paper commanding so magnificent a revenue and practically assured of its permanency; for the *Times* has really almost a monopoly of the advertisements that address themselves to the moneyed and influential classes. There are people who may see these in any other paper; but everybody *must* see them in the *Times*. Do you care to know who is dead or married; to contrast the attractions of the various Transatlantic steam-packet companies; to know what is going forward nightly in the theatres? it is to a copy of the *Times* you turn instinctively,



knowing exactly where to put your finger on what you want. So when one is looking out for an investment, safe or speculative, it is the *Times* that introduces you to the joint-stock company (limited) which offers you handsome returns if you are content to run certain risks; or to the colonial government, the corporation, or the harbor board, which is issuing its six or four per cent bonds at ninety-seven. Casual advertisers know there must be tens of thousands of people daily who, taking up the *Times* advertising-sheet with some definite purpose, or, still more probably, from sheer listlessness, may be caught by some announcement that strikes their eye and their fancy. The invalid comes on a grand discovery which seems the very thing for his chronic complaint; the sportsman on a new self-acting central fire; the literary man on an *édition de luxe*; and the *virtuoso* on some priceless treasure of the antique. Creditors are warned to send in their claims; charities appeal to the sympathies of the benevolent; properties and residences to be sold or let are jostled into the market by whole pages; and servants, from the *chef* to the under scullery maid, are offering themselves for situations by the hundred. In short, it is the journal of the financier, the solicitor, the man of business, the philanthropist — of almost every class, or of any class you please, who are possessed of a certain property qualification or social standing. Should the paper seem to decline in point of talent for a time, or be run hard by some enterprising competitor, owing to some adventitious circumstance, it is almost impossible that its circulation can seriously or permanently decline; because it is carried along by the sheer weight of those advertisements, till it has time to pull itself together, and recover any lost ground. Putting out of the question the unequalled amount of news and literary matter it provides, people must take it in for the sake of the advertisements. And meanwhile its ample resources come into play. The spirit of enterprise on which it prides itself is piqued; the interests which are grown so gigantic are threatened; it spends money, if needful, more liberally than before; — and the game must almost infallibly go against the adversary, even though he had marked a trick and two by honors. And in all probability the relative superiority they give it is likely to be increased indefinitely as advertising indefinitely expands. It is not only that everybody

advertises; but now they advertise on a scale that would have seemed reckless insanity to their fathers. The tradesman of the old school was shy of throwing away his sovereigns; and he had been brought up to believe firmly in the maxim that a bird in the hand was worth two in the bush. Now we are gone far beyond curt announcements. It is nothing unusual to have a person impressing on you, through a column and a half, that he can sell his goods at co-operative prices. The advent of a new mineral water is heralded for months before by columns of sentences that simply repeat each other with slight variations; and banking establishments, which may be presumed to be careful of their money, think it worth while to publish their balance-sheets at length. The fact is, that the trading classes have come to the conclusion that nothing pays like profuse advertising, and that the more you sow the more richly shall you reap. Already the issues of the *Times* have been expanding under the pressure, and each additional half-sheet of advertisements carries a percentage of literary matter along with it. When trade revives, or in the next period of inflation, we may see advertisers making interest with the leading journal to have pages devoted to their special affairs, and waiting their turn for admission, like the aspirants to a fashionable club. And as the charges of a monopolist are regulated by demand, there may be advances on present rates, with a corresponding increase in quantity; while, should the revenues of Printing House Square expand, the public will have a percentage of the profits given back to them in some shape, and the paper become still more of a national institution.

It is a question too risky, perhaps, ever to be tried, whether the *Times* would gain or lose by reducing its price. As experience seems to show, it would certainly slip between two stools, unless it came boldly down to a penny; and though it could work so far on velvet with its revenue from advertisements, the actual sale of the journal would almost necessarily be a loss. Should the discovery be made that has so long been sought after, and could the price of such paper as the *Times* is printed on be reduced by a half, we might, perhaps, see the experiment tried. It would be a misfortune for the penny papers; there are several of these that have deserved all their success. Their promoters have shown qualities of energy and public spirit that scarcely fall short of those of the leading journal: they have

been patient and courageous under adversity; and have only become more liberally enterprising when the tide of prosperity turned in their favor. It was a bold measure when they decided to publish at a penny,—though it must be remembered that when that experiment was first attempted, there was little to be lost and much to be retrieve. When the experiment had succeeded in one case, imitation was natural, if not necessary. The story of the *Daily News* is a very interesting one. It was started in 1846, and apparently under very favorable circumstances. The hundred shares into which it was divided were influentially held. Charles Dickens consented to become editor; and Mr. Dilke, who then owned the *Athenaeum*, was the manager. From the first it enlisted distinguished contributors, several of whom had a pecuniary stake in it. It began its operations on the only sound system,—that of spending money freely, and paying its staff most liberally. No paper can hope to make profits at first; but for years the losses of the *News* were enormous. Then the price was reduced nearly by a half—from fourpence to twopence halfpenny. That half measure was a mistake, of course; and the increase of circulation bore no proportion to the reduction of income. The managers beat a humiliating retreat to the former fourpence, without recovering the lost ground. At last they decided to take the bull by the horns, and come out as a penny journal, while retrenching at the same time in nothing except in the quality of the paper. Whether they had immediate reason to congratulate themselves on the change, we do not know, but it is an ill wind that blows nobody good: the Franco-German war came as a godsend to them; and their war news was so full, so animated, and so early, that suddenly the circulation rose enormously. Any one in the habit of travelling to London by morning train, when Tours was threatened and Paris beleaguered, must remember the rush upon the news-boys for copies of the *Daily News*. The advertisements had, of course, a corresponding filip; the size of the paper was enlarged, and it became a most flourishing property. Since then it must have undergone considerable fluctuations; but its proprietors, on the whole, can have had no cause to complain, and it is firmly established as an excellent investment.

The history of its younger rival, the *Telegraph*, is even more romantic, so far

as vicissitudes are concerned. The *Daily News* never showed signs of extreme in-  
anition to the public, whatever may have been the secret anxieties of its shareholders. The *Telegraph* appeared in *forma pauperis* from the first. It came out in 1855 at the then unprecedentedly low price of twopence, but it excited no sort of sensation. The failure is easily explained by the fact of its having been launched without the money necessary to grease the slips. Its then proprietor had to shift on credit when he could procure it, and gradually got deeper and deeper in debt, though his liabilities, for obvious reasons, were trifling enough in the aggregate. Among the creditors was Mr. Levy, the present owner, who, after taking over the copyright in security for an advance, finally bought the wreck of the property for a trifle. We have heard that he telegraphed to a brother in Paris to ask if he cared to go halves in the modest venture. The answer was in the affirmative; and the fortunate speculator, as a sleeping partner in the concern, has since been drawing a moiety of profits which can only be second to those of the *Times*. For not only is the circulation still probably the greatest in the world—though, from the circumstance of its ceasing to advertise the extent of the issue, we assume that the circulation has probably been declining—but the *Telegraph*, in the way of advertisements, has a most lucrative *clientèle* of its own. The *Telegraph* followed the example of the *Standard* in coming out with a double sheet; and not unfrequently it has added a supplement, making a total of ten pages for one penny. We need hardly say that the advertisements occupy the lion's share of the extra sheet,—and so much the better for the *Telegraph*. At one time, if we remember right, it sold or published—for the two things are not necessarily the same—a daily average of over two hundred thousand copies,—a success which was altogether unparalleled in its way, and the more surprising in a paper comparatively so youthful. Though the *Standard* appeared more than half a century ago, yet as a penny paper it is scarcely senior to the *Telegraph*. It passed through the twopenny to the penny stage—and ever since, it must, on the whole, have been rapidly improving as a property; while its literary character, and, doubtless, its circulation, stand at least as high at present as they have ever done. No penny paper, as it takes good care to announce, gives its readers so much mat-



ter for the money; and whether we look at the quantity or the quality, the results are equally creditable and wonderful. It is not our object at present to make literary criticisms or invidious comparisons; but by general consent, the *Standard*, during the last year or two, has taken a very extraordinary *élan* in the value of its news and the brilliancy of its articles.

We have seen something of the working of some of the greatest journals in the world, and we need not prolong our article by visiting establishments that are less pretentious, and necessarily less advanced. But before closing it, we may call attention to the extraordinary progress the press has been making of late years in Germany, under constitutions that are either Liberal or profess to be so. Those small-sized German papers are priced comparatively dear. Yet the proprietors occasionally perform feats of enterprise that are worthy of their *confères* in London or New York. There is the *Kölnische Zeitung* for example, which has still its head office in the old Rhenish city, though it is a Berlin journal to all intents and purposes. Its war intelligence during the Franco-German war was admirable; its foreign correspondence is invariably excellent; and its leading articles are lucid, pointed, and closely reasoned. But its most conspicuous features are its reporting and distribution. It has its staff of short-hand writers in a gallery in the Chambers of the capital, who relieve each other every ten minutes; and the notes of each reporter are flashed immediately along the electric wires to Cologne. There they are printed and published in time for despatch by the night train; and the paper circulates in Berlin in time to be laid on the breakfast-tables. The number of home-subscribers has increased in ten or twelve years from about twelve thousand to twenty-six thousand,—a very creditable total for a country like Germany; and a separate edition is published besides for transmission to foreign countries. More significant still of the growing interest in public affairs is the state of things in southern Germany. Before 1848, with the exception of the *Government Gazette* there was no political newspaper in Vienna. In 1860 there were over a hundred journals of one kind or another; while in the Exhibition year, before the financial crash, according to figures in the official statistics, they had increased to three hundred and fifty-five. Nothing can be

more perfectly organized than the chief establishments; so far, at least, as the literary arrangements are concerned. Each sub-editor has his department—home politics, foreign affairs, finance, etc.; and while their apartments are as handsome as we might expect in a city that half ruined itself by extravagance in building, we believe that great improvements have been introduced of late years in the mechanical departments.

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From The New Quarterly Review.  
THE STORY OF A LIE.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### INTRODUCES THE ADMIRAL.

WHEN Dick Naseby was in Paris he made some odd acquaintances; for he was one of those who have ears to hear, and can use their eyes no less than their intelligence. He made as many thoughts as Stuart Mill; but his philosophy concerned flesh and blood, and was experimental as to its method. He was a type-hunter among mankind. He despised small game and insignificant personalities, whether in the shape of dukes or bagmen, letting them go by like seaweed; but show him a refined or powerful face, let him hear a plangent or a penetrating voice, fish for him with a living look in some one's eye, a passionate gesture, a meaning and ambiguous smile, and his mind was instantaneously awakened. "There was a man, there was a woman," he seemed to say, and he stood up to the task of comprehension with the delight of an artist in his art.

And indeed, rightly considered, this interest of his was an artistic interest. There is no science in the personal study of human nature. All comprehension is creation; the woman I love is somewhat of my handiwork; and the great lover, like the great painter, is he that can so embellish his subject as to make her more than human, whilst yet by a cunning art he has so based his apotheosis on the nature of the case that the woman can go on being a true woman, and give her character free play, and show littleness, or cherish spite, or be greedy of common pleasures, and he continue to worship without a thought of incongruity. To love a character is only the heroic way of understanding it. When we love, by some noble method of our own or some nobility of mien or nature in the other,

we apprehend the loved one by what is noblest in ourselves. When we are merely studying an eccentricity, the method of our study is but a series of allowances. To begin to understand is to begin to sympathize; for comprehension comes only when we have stated another's faults and virtues in terms of our own. Hence the proverbial toleration of artists for their own evil creations. Hence, too, it came about that Dick Naseby, a high-minded creature, and as scrupulous and brave a gentleman as you would want to meet, held in a sort of affection the various human creeping things whom he had met and studied.

One of these was Mr. Peter Van Tromp, an English-speaking, two-legged animal of the international genus, and by profession of general and more than equivocal utility. Years before he had been a painter of some standing in a colony, and portraits signed "Van Tromp" had celebrated the greatness of colonial governors and judges. In those days he had been married, and driven his wife and infant daughter in a pony trap. What were the steps of his declension? No one exactly knew. Here he was at least, and had been any time these past ten years, a sort of dismal parasite upon the foreigner in Paris.

It would be hazardous to specify his exact industry. Coarsely followed, it would have merited a name grown somewhat unfamiliar to our ears. Followed as he followed it, with a skilful reticence, in a kind of social chiaroscuro, it was still possible for the polite to call him a professional painter. His lair was in the Grand Hotel and the gaudiest *cafés*. There he might be seen jotting off a sketch with an air of some inspiration; and he was always affable, and one of the easiest of men to fall in talk withal. A conversation usually ripened into a peculiar sort of intimacy, and it was extraordinary how many little services Van Tromp contrived to render in the course of six and thirty hours. He occupied a position between a friend and a courier, which made him worse than embarrassing to repay. But those whom he obliged could always buy one of his villanous little pictures, or, where the favors had been prolonged and more than usually delicate, might order and pay for a large canvas, with perfect certainty that they would hear no more of the transaction.

Among resident artists he enjoyed celebrity of a non-professional sort. He had spent more money—no less than

three individual fortunes, it was whispered—than any of his associates could ever hope to gain. Apart from his colonial career, he had been to Greece in a brigantine with four brass carronades; he had travelled Europe in a chaise and four, drawing bridle at the palace-doors of German princes; queens of song and dance had followed him like sheep and paid his tailor's bills. And to behold him now, seeking small loans with plaintive condescension, sponging for breakfast on an art-student of nineteen, a fallen Don Juan who had neglected to die at the propitious hour, had a color of romance for young imaginations. His name and his bright past, seen through the prism of whispered gossip, had gained him the nickname of "the Admiral."

Dick found him one day at the receipt of custom, rapidly painting a pair of hens and a cock in a little watercolor sketching-box, and now and then glancing at the ceiling like a man who should seek inspiration from the muse. Dick thought it remarkable that a painter should choose to work over an absinthe in a public *café*, and looked the man over. The aged rakishness of his appearance was set off by a youthful costume; he had disreputable grey hair and a disreputable, sore, red nose; but the coat and the gesture, the outworks of the man, were still designed for show. Dick came up to his table and inquired if he might look at what the gentleman was doing. No one was so delighted as the Admiral.

"A bit of a thing," said he. "I just dash them off like that. I—I dash them off," he added with a gesture.

"Quite so," said Dick, who was appalled by the feebleness of the production.

"Understand me," continued Van Tromp; "I am a man of the world. And yet—once an artist always an artist. All of a sudden a thought takes me in the street; I become its prey; it's like a pretty woman; no use to struggle; I must—dash it off."

"I see," said Dick.

"Yes," pursued the painter; "it all comes easily, easily to me; it is not my business; it's a pleasure. Life is my business—life—this great city, Paris—Paris after dark—its lights, its gardens, its odd corners. Aha!" he cried, "to be young again! The heart is young, but the heels are leaden. A poor, mean business, to grow old! Nothing remains but the *coup d'œil*, the contemplative man's enjoyment, Mr. —," and he paused for the name.

"Naseby," returned Dick.

The other treated him at once to an exciting beverage, and expatiated on the pleasure of meeting a compatriot in a foreign land; to hear him, you would have thought they had encountered in central Africa. Dick had never found any one take a fancy to him so readily, nor show it in an easier or less offensive manner. He seemed tickled with him as an elderly fellow about town might be tickled by a pleasant and witty lad; he indicated that he was no precisian, but in his wildest times had never been such a blade as he thought Dick. Dick protested, but in vain. This manner of carrying an intimacy at the bayonet's point was Van Tromp's stock in trade. With an older man he insinuated himself; with youth he imposed himself, and in the same breath imposed an ideal on his victim, who saw that he must work up to it or lose the esteem of this old and vicious patron. And what young man can bear to lose a character for vice?

At last, as it grew towards dinner-time, "Do you know Paris?" asked Van Tromp.

"Not so well as you, I am convinced," said Dick.

"And so am I," returned Van Tromp gaily. "Paris! My young friend—you will allow me?—when you know Paris as I do, you will have seen strange things. I say no more; all I say is, strange things. We are men of the world, you and I, and in Paris, in the heart of civilized existence. This is an opportunity, Mr. Naseby. Let us dine. Let me show you where to dine."

Dick consented. On the way to dinner the Admiral showed him where to buy gloves, and made him buy them; where to buy cigars, and made him buy a vast store, some of which he obligingly accepted. At the restaurant he showed him what to order, with surprising consequences in the bill. What he made that night by his percentages it would be hard to estimate. And all the while Dick smilingly consented, understanding well that he was being done, but taking his losses in the pursuit of character as a hunter sacrifices his dogs. As for the strange things, the reader will be relieved to hear that they were no stranger than might have been expected, and he may find things quite as strange without the expense of a Van Tromp for guide. Yet he was a guide of no mean order, who

made up for the poverty of what he had to show by a copious, imaginative commentary.

"And such," said he, with a hiccup, "such is Paris."

"Pooh!" said Dick, who was tired of the performance.

The Admiral hung an ear, and looked up sidelong with a glimmer of suspicion.

"Good night," said Dick; "I'm tired."

"So English!" cried Van Tromp, clutching him by the hand. "So English! So *blasé*! Such a charming companion! Let me see you home."

"Look here," returned Dick, "I have said good-night, and now I'm going. You're an amusing old boy; I like you, in a sense; but here's an end of it for to-night. Not another cigar, not another grog, not another percentage out of me."

"I beg your pardon!" cried the Admiral with dignity.

"Tut, man!" said Dick; "you're not offended; you're a man of the world, I thought. I've been studying you, and it's over. Have I not paid for the lesson? *Au revoir*."

Van Tromp laughed gaily, shook hands up to the elbows, hoped cordially they would meet again and that often, but looked after Dick as he departed with a tremor of indignation. After that they two not unfrequently fell in each other's way, and Dick would often treat the old boy to breakfast on a moderate scale and in a restaurant of his own selection. Often, too, he would lend Van Tromp the matter of a pound, in view of that gentleman's contemplated departure for Australia; there would be a scene of farewell almost touching in character, and a week or a month later they would meet on the same boulevard without surprise or embarrassment. And in the mean time Dick learned more about his acquaintance on all sides; heard of his yacht, his chaise and four, his brief season of celebrity amid a more confiding population, his daughter, of whom he loved to whimper in his cups, his sponging, parasitical, nameless way of life; and with each new detail something that was not merely interest nor yet altogether affection grew up in his mind towards this disreputable stepson of the arts. Ere he left Paris Van Tromp was one of those whom he entertained to a farewell supper; and the old gentlemen made the speech of the evening, and then fell below the table, weeping, smiling, paralyzed.

## CHAPTER II.

## A LETTER TO THE PAPERS.

OLD Mr. Naseby had the sturdy, untutored nature of the upper middle class. The universe seemed plain to him. "The thing's right," he would say, or "the thing's wrong;" and there was an end of it. There was a contained, prophetic energy in his utterances, even on the slightest affairs; he *saw* the damned thing; if you did not, it must be from perversity of will; and this sent the blood to his head. Apart from this, which made him an exacting companion, he was one of the most upright, hot-tempered, hot-headed old gentlemen in England. Florid, with white hair, the face of an old Jupiter, and the figure of an old fox-hunter, he enlivened the vale of Thyme from end to end on his big, cantering chestnut.

He had a hearty respect for Dick as a lad of parts. Dick had a respect for his father as the best of men, tempered by the politic revolt of a youth who has to see to his own independence. Whenever the pair argued, they came to an open rupture; and arguments were frequent, for they were both positive, and both loved the work of the intelligence. It was a treat to hear Mr. Naseby defending the Church of England in a volley of oaths, or supporting ascetic morals with an enthusiasm not entirely innocent of port wine. Dick used to wax indignant, and none the less so because, as his father was a skilful disputant, he found himself not seldom in the wrong. On these occasions, he would redouble in energy, and declare that black was white, and blue yellow, with much conviction and heat of manner; but in the morning such a license of debate weighed upon him like a crime, and he would seek out his father, where he walked before breakfast on a terrace overlooking all the the vale of Thyme.

"I have to apologize, sir, for last night——" he would begin.

"Of course you have," the old gentleman would cut in cheerfully. "You spoke like a fool. Say no more about it."

"You do not understand me, sir. I refer to a particular point. I confess there is much force in your argument from the doctrines of possibilities."

"Of course there is," returned his father. "Come down and look at the stables. Only," he would add, "bear this in mind, and do remember that a man of my age and experience knows more

about what he is saying than a raw boy."

He would utter the word "boy" even more offensively than the average of fathers, and the light way in which he accepted these apologies cut Richard to the heart. The latter drew slighting comparisons, and remembered that he was the only one who ever apologized. This gave him a high station in his own esteem, and thus contributed indirectly to his better behavior; for he was scrupulous as well as high-spirited, and prided himself on nothing more than on a just submission.

So things went on until the famous occasion when Mr. Naseby, becoming engrossed in securing the election of a sound party candidate to Parliament, wrote a flaming letter to the papers. The letter had about every demerit of party letters in general: it was expressed with the energy of a believer; it was personal; it was a little more than half unfair, and about a quarter untrue. The old man did not mean to say what was untrue, you may be sure; but he had rashly picked up gossip, as his prejudice suggested, and now rashly launched it on the public with the sanction of his name.

"The Liberal candidate," he concluded, "is thus a public turncoat. Is that the sort of man we want? He has been given the lie, and has swallowed the insult. Is that the sort of man we want? I answer, No! With all the force of my conviction, I answer, *No!*"

And then he signed and dated the letter with an amateur's pride, and looked to be famous by the morrow.

Dick, who had heard nothing of the matter, was up first on that inauspicious day, and took the journal to an arbor in the garden. He found his father's manifesto in one column; and in another a leading article. "No one that we are aware of," ran the article, "had consulted Mr. Naseby on the subject, but if he had been appealed to by the whole body of electors, his letter would be none the less ungenerous and unjust to Mr. Dalton. We do not choose to give the lie to Mr. Naseby, for we are too well aware of the consequences; but we shall venture instead to print the facts of both cases referred to by this red-hot partisan in another portion of our issue. Mr. Naseby is of course a large proprietor in our neighborhood; but fidelity to facts, decent feeling, and English grammar, are all of them qualities more important than the possession of land. Mr. N—— is doubt-

less a great man; in his large gardens and that half mile of greenhouses, where he has probably ripened his intellect and temper, he may say what he will to his hired vassals, but (as the Scotch say)

here  
He mauna think to domineer.

Liberalism," continued the anonymous journalist, "is of too free and sound a growth," etc.

Richard Naseby read the whole thing from beginning to end; and a crushing shame fell upon his spirit. His father had played the fool; he had gone out noisily to war, and come back with confusion. The moment that his trumpets sounded, he had been disgracefully unhorsed. There was no question as to the facts; they were one and all against the squire. Richard would have given his ears to have suppressed the issue; but as that could not be done, he had his horse saddled, and furnishing himself with a convenient staff, road off at once to Thymebury.

The editor was at breakfast in a large, sad apartment. The absence of furniture, the extreme meanness of the meal, and the haggard, bright-eyed, consumptive look of the culprit, unmanned our hero; but he clung to his stick, and was stout and warlike.

"You wrote the article in this morning's paper?" he demanded.

"You are young Mr. Naseby? I *published* it," replied the editor, rising.

"My father is an old man," said Richard; and then with an outburst, "And a damned sight finer fellow than either you or Dalton!" He stopped and swallowed; he was determined that all should go with regularity. "I have but one question to put to you, sir," he resumed. "Granted that my father was misinformed, would it not have been more decent to withhold the letter and communicate with him in private?"

"Believe me," returned the editor, "that alternative was not open to me. Mr. Naseby told me in a note that he had sent his letter to three other journals, and in fact threatened me with what he called exposure if I kept it back from mine. I am really concerned at what has happened; I sympathize and approve of your emotion, young gentleman; but the attack on Mr. Dalton was gross, very gross, and I had no choice but to offer him my columns to reply. Party has its duties, sir," added the scribe, kindling, as one who should propose a sentiment; "and the attack was gross."

Richard stood for half a minute digesting the answer; and then the god of fair play came uppermost in his heart, and murmuring "Good morning," he made his escape into the street.

His horse was not hurried on the way home, and he was late for breakfast. The squire was standing with his back to the fire in a state bordering on apoplexy, his fingers violently knitted under his coat-tails. As Richard came in, he opened and shut his mouth like a codfish, and his eyes protruded.

"Have you seen that, sir?" he cried, nodding towards the paper.

"Yes, sir," said Richard.

"Oh, you've read it, have you?"

"Yes, I have read it," replied Richard, looking at his foot.

"Well," demanded the old gentleman, "and what have you to say to it?"

"You seem to have been misinformed," said Dick.

"Well? What then? Is your mind so sterile, sir? Have you not a word of comment? no proposal?"

"I fear, sir, you must apologize to Mr. Dalton. It would be more handsome, indeed it would be only just, and a free acknowledgment would go far —" Richard paused, no language appearing delicate enough to suit the case.

"That is a suggestion which should have come from me, sir," roared the father. "It is out of place upon your lips. It is not the thought of a loyal son. Why, sir, if my father had been plunged in such deplorable circumstances, I should have thrashed the editor of that vile sheet within an inch of his life. I should have thrashed the man, sir. It would have been the action of an ass; but it would have shown that I had the blood and the natural affection of a man. Son? You are no son, no son of mine, sir!"

"Sir!" said Dick.

"I'll tell you what you are, sir," pursued the squire. "You're a Benthamite. I disown you. Your mother would have died for shame; there was no modern cant about your mother; she thought — she said to me, sir — I'm glad she's in her grave, Dick Naseby. Misinformed! Misinformed, sir? Have you no loyalty, no spring, no natural affections? Are you clockwork, hey? Away? This is no place for you. Away!" (waving his hands in the air). "Go away! Leave me!"

At this moment Dick beat a retreat in a disarray of nerves, a whistling and clamor of his own arteries, and in short



in such a final bodily disorder as made him alike incapable of speech or hearing. And in the midst of all this turmoil, a sense of unpardonable injustice remained graven in his memory.

### CHAPTER III.

#### IN THE ADMIRAL'S NAME.

THERE was no return to the subject. Dick and his father were henceforth on terms of coldness. The upright old gentleman grew more upright when he met his son, buckrammed with immortal anger; he asked after Dick's health, and discussed the weather and the crops with an appalling courtesy; his pronunciation was *point-de-vie*, his voice was distant, distinct, and sometimes almost trembling with suppressed indignation.

As for Dick, it seemed to him as if his life had come abruptly to an end. He came out of his theories and clevernesses; his premature man-of-the-worldness, on which he had prided himself on his travels, "shrank like a thing ashamed" before this real sorrow. Pride, wounded honor, pity and respect tussled together daily in his heart; and now he was within an ace of throwing himself upon his father's mercy, and now of slipping forth at night and coming back no more to Naseby House. He suffered from the sight of his father, nay, even from the neighborhood of this familiar valley, where every corner had its legend, and he was besieged with memories of childhood. If he fled into a new land, and among none but strangers, he might escape his destiny, who knew? and begin again light-heartedly. From that chief peak of the hills, that now and then, like an uplifted finger, shone in an arrow of sunlight through the broken clouds, the shepherd in clear weather might perceive the shining of the sea. There, he thought, was hope. But his heart failed him when he saw the squire; and he remained. His fate was not that of the voyager by sea and land; he was to travel in the spirit, and begin his journey sooner than he supposed.

For it chanced one day that his walk led him into a portion of the uplands which was almost unknown to him. Scrambling through some rough woods, he came out upon a moorland reaching towards the hills. A few lofty Scotch firs grew hard by upon a knoll; a clear fountain near the foot of the knoll sent up a miniature streamlet which meandered in the heather. A shower had just skimmed by, but now the sun shone brightly, and

the air smelt of the pines and the grass. On a stone under the trees sat a young lady sketching. We have learned to think of women in a sort of symbolic transfiguration, based on clothes; and one of the readiest ways in which we conceive our mistress is as a composite thing, principally petticoats. But humanity has triumphed over clothes; the look, the touch of a dress has become alive; and the woman who stitched herself into these material integuments, has now permeated right through and gone out to the tip of her skirt. It was only a black dress that caught Dick Naseby's eye; but it took possession of his mind, and all other thoughts departed. He drew near, and the girl turned round. Her face startled him; it was a face he wanted; and he took it in at once like breathing air.

"I beg your pardon," he said, taking off his hat, "you are sketching."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "for my own amusement. I despise the thing."

"Ten to one, you do yourself injustice," returned Dick. "Besides, it's a free-masonry. I sketch myself, and you know what that implies."

"No. What?" she asked.

"Two things," he answered. "First, that I am no very difficult critic; and second, that I have a right to see your picture."

She covered the block with both her hands. "Oh, no," she said; "I am ashamed."

"Indeed, I might give you a hint," said Dick. "Although no artist myself, I have known many; in Paris I had many for friends, and used to prowl among studios."

"In Paris?" she cried, with a leap of light into her eyes. "Did you ever meet Mr. Van Tromp?"

"I? Yes. Why, you're not the Admiral's daughter, are you?"

"The Admiral? Do they call him that?" she cried. "Oh, how nice, how nice of them! It is the younger men who call him so, is it not?"

"Yes," said Dick, somewhat heavily.

"You can understand now," she said, with an unspeakable accent of contented, noble-minded pride, "why it is I do not choose to show my sketch. Van Tromp's daughter! The Admiral's daughter! I delight in that name. The Admiral! And so you know my father?"

"Well," said Dick, "I met him often; we were even intimate. He may have mentioned my name — Naseby."

"He writes so little. He is so busy,



so devoted to his art! I have had a half wish," she added laughing, "that my father was a plainer man, whom I could help—to whom I could be a credit; but only sometimes you know, and with only half my heart. For a great painter! You have seen his works?"

"I have seen some of them," returned Dick; "they—they are very nice."

She laughed aloud. "Nice?" she repeated. "I see you don't care much for art."

"Not much," he admitted; "but I know that many people are glad to buy Mr. Van Tromp's pictures."

"Call him the Admiral!" she cried. "It sounds kindly and familiar; and I like to think that he is appreciated and looked up to by young painters. He has not always been appreciated; he had a cruel life for many years; and when I think"—there were tears in her eyes—"when I think of that, I feel inclined to be a fool," she broke off. "And now I shall go home. You have filled me full of happiness; for think, Mr. Naseby, I have not seen my father since I was six years old; and yet he is in my thoughts all day! You must come and call on me; my aunt will be delighted, I am sure; and then you will tell me all—all about my father, will you not?"

Dick helped her to get her sketching-traps together; and when all was ready, she gave Dick her hand and a frank return of pressure.

"You are my father's friend," she said; "we shall be great friends too. You must come and see me soon."

Then she was gone down the hillside at a run; and Dick stood by himself in a state of some bewilderment and even distress. There were elements of laughter in the business; but the black dress, and the face that belonged to it, and the hand that he had held in his, inclined him to a serious view. What was he, under the circumstances, called upon to do? Perhaps to avoid the girl? Well, he would think about that. Perhaps to break the truth to her? Why, ten to one, such was her infatuation, he would fail. Perhaps to keep up the illusion, to color the raw facts; to help her to false ideas, while yet not plainly stating falsehoods? Well, he would see about that; he would also see about avoiding the girl. He saw about this last so well, that the next afternoon beheld him on his way to visit her.

In the mean time the girl had gone straight home, light as a bird, tremulous with joy, to the little cottage where she

lived alone with a maiden aunt; and to that lady, a grim, sixty years old Scotch-woman, with a nodding head, communicated news of her encounter and invitation.

"A friend of his?" cried the aunt. "What like is he? What did ye say was his name?"

She was dead silent, and stared at the old woman darkling. Then very slowly, "I said he was my father's friend; I have invited him to my house, and come he shall," she said; and with that she walked off to her room, where she sat staring at the wall all the evening. Miss M'Glashan, for that was the aunt's name, read a large Bible in the kitchen with some of the joys of martyrdom.

It was perhaps half past three when Dick presented himself, rather scrupulously dressed, before the cottage door; he knocked, and a voice bade him enter. The kitchen, which opened directly off the garden, was somewhat darkened by foliage; but he could see her as she approached from the far end to meet him. This second sight of her surprised him. Her strong, black brows spoke of temper easily aroused and hard to quiet; her mouth was small, nervous, and weak; there was something dangerous and sulky underlying, in her nature, much that was honest, compassionate, and even noble.

"My father's name," she said, "has made you very welcome."

And she gave him her hand, with a sort of curtsy. It was a pretty greeting, although somewhat mannered; and Dick felt himself among the gods. She led him through the kitchen to a parlor, and presented him to Miss M'Glashan.

"Esther," said the aunt, "see and make Mr. Naseby his tea."

And as soon as the girl was gone upon this hospitable intent, the old woman crossed the room and came quite near to Dick as if in menace.

"Ye know that man?" she asked in an imperious whisper.

"Mr. Van Tromp?" said Dick. "Yes, I know him."

"Well, and what brings ye here?" she said. "I couldn't save the mother—her that's dead—but the bairn!" She had a note in her voice that filled poor Dick with consternation. "Man," she went on, "what is it now? Is it money?"

"My dear lady," said Dick, "I think you misinterpret my position. I am young Mr. Naseby of Naseby House. My acquaintance with Mr. Van Tromp is

really very slender; I am only afraid that Miss Van Tromp has exaggerated our intimacy in her own imagination. I know positively nothing of his private affairs, and do not care to know. I met him casually in Paris—that is all.”

Miss M'Glashan drew a long breath. “In Paris?” she said. “Well, and what do you think of him?—what do ye think of him?” she repeated, with a different scansion, as Richard, who had not much taste for such a question, kept her waiting for an answer.

“I found him a very agreeable companion,” he said.

“Ay,” said she, “did ye! And how does he win his bread?”

“I fancy,” he gasped, “that Mr. Van Tromp has many generous friends.”

“I’ll warrant!” she sneered; and before Dick could find more to say, she was gone from the room.

Esther returned with the tea-things, and sat down.

“Now,” she said cosily, “tell me all about my father.”

“He”—stammered Dick, “he is a very agreeable companion.”

“I shall begin to think it is more than you are, Mr. Naseby,” she said, with a laugh. “I am his daughter, you forget. Begin at the beginning, and tell me all you have seen of him, all he said and all you answered. You must have met somewhere; begin with that.”

So with that he began: how he had found the Admiral painting in a *café*; how his art so possessed him that he could not wait till he got home to—well, to dash off his idea; how (this in reply to a question) his idea consisted of a cock crowing and two hens eating corn; how he was fond of cocks and hens; how this did not lead him to neglect more ambitious forms of art; how he had a picture in his studio of a Greek subject which was said to be remarkable from several points of view; how no one had seen it nor knew the precise site of the studio in which it was being vigorously though secretly connected; how (in answer to a suggestion) the shyness was common to the Admiral, Michelangelo, and others; how they (Dick and Van Tromp) had struck up an acquaintance at once, and dined together that same night; how he (the Admiral) had once given money to a beggar; how he spoke with effusion of his little daughter; how he had once borrowed money to send her a doll—a trait worthy of Newton, she being then in her nineteenth year at least; how, if the doll never arrived

(which it appeared it never did), the trait was only more characteristic of the highest order of creative intellect; how he was—no, not beautiful—striking, yes, Dick would go so far, decidedly striking in aspearance; how his boots were made to lace and his coat was black, not cut-away, a frock; and so on, and so on by the yard. It was astonishing how few lies were necessary. After all, people exaggerated the difficulty of life. A little steering, just a touch of the rudder now and then, and with a willing listener there is no limit to the domain of equivocal speech. Sometimes Miss M'Glashan made a freezing sojourn in the parlor; and then the task seemed unaccountably more difficult; but to Esther, who was all eyes and ears, her face alight with interest, his stream of language flowed without break or stumble, and his mind was ever fertile in ingenious evasions and—

What an afternoon it was for Esther!

“Ah!” she said at last, “it’s good to hear all this! My aunt, you should know, is narrow and too religious; she cannot understand an artist’s life. It does not frighten me,” she added grandly; “I am an artist’s daughter.”

With that speech, Dick consoled himself for his imposture; she was not deceived so grossly after all; and then if a fraud, was not the fraud piety itself?—and what could be more obligatory than to keep alive in the heart of a daughter that filial trust and honor which, even although misplaced, became her like a jewel of the mind? There might be another thought, a shade of cowardice, a selfish desire to please; poor Dick was merely human; and what would you have had him do?

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### ESTHER ON THE FILIAL RELATION.

A MONTH later Dick and Esther met at the stile beside the cross roads; had there been any one to see them but the birds and summer insects, it would have been remarked that they met after a different fashion from the day before. Dick took her in his arms, and their lips were set together for a long while. Then he held her at arm’s length, and they looked straight into each other’s eyes.

“Esther!” he said; you should have heard his voice!

“Dick!” said she.

“My darling!”

It was some time before they started for their walk; he kept an arm about her,

and their sides were close together as they walked; the sun, the birds, the west wind running among the trees, a pressure, a look, the grasp tightening round a single finger, these things stood them in lieu of thought and filled their hearts with joy. The path they were following led them through a wood of pine-trees carpeted with heather and blueberry, and upon this pleasant carpet, Dick, not without some seriousness, made her sit down.

"Esther!" he began, "there is something you ought to know. You know my father is a rich man, and you would think, now that we love each other, we might marry when we pleased. But I fear, darling, we may have long to wait, and shall want all our courage."

"I have courage for anything," she said, "I have all I want; with you and my father, I am so well off, and waiting is made so happy, that I could wait a lifetime and not weary."

He had a sharp pang at the mention of the Admiral. "Hear me out," he continued. "I ought to have told you this before; but it is a thought I shrink from; if it were possible, I should not tell you even now. My poor father and I are scarce on speaking terms."

"Your father," she repeated, turning pale.

"It must sound strange to you; but yet I cannot think I am to blame," he said. "I will tell you how it happened."

"Oh, Dick!" she said, when she had heard him to an end, "how brave you are, and how proud! Yet I would not be proud with a father. I would tell him all."

"What!" cried Dick, "go in months after, and brag that I had meant to thrash the man, and then didn't. And why? Because my father had made a bigger ass of himself than I supposed. My dear, that's nonsense."

She winced at his words and drew away. "But when that is all he asks," she pleaded. "If he only knew that you had felt that impulse, it would make him so proud and happy. He would see you were his own son after all, and had the same thoughts and the same chivalry of spirit. And then you did yourself injustice when you spoke just now. It was because the editor was weak and poor and excused himself, that you repented your first determination. Had he been a big red man, with whiskers, you would have beaten him—you know you would—if Mr. Naseby had been ten times more committed. Do you think, if you can tell

it to me, and I understand at once, that it would be more difficult to tell it to your own father, or that he would not be more ready to sympathize with you than I am? And I love you, Dick; but then he is your father."

"My dear," said Dick, desperately, "you do not understand; you do not know what it is to be treated with daily want of comprehension and daily small injustices, through childhood and boyhood and manhood, until you despair of a hearing, until the thing rides you like a nightmare, until you almost hate the sight of the man you love, and who's your father after all. In short, Esther, you don't know what it is to have a father, and that's what blinds you."

"I see," she said musingly, "you mean that I am fortunate in my father. But I am not so fortunate after all; you forget, I do not know him; it is you who know him; he is already more your father than mine." And here she took his hand. Dick's heart had grown as cold as ice. "But I am sorry for you, too," she continued, "it must be very sad and lonely."

"You misunderstand me," said Dick, chokingly. "My father is the best man I know in all this world; he is worth a hundred of me, only he doesn't understand me, and he can't be made to."

There was a silence for a while. "Dick," she began again, "I am going to ask a favor, it's the first since you said you loved me. May I see your father—see him pass, I mean, where he will not observe me?"

"Why?" asked Dick.

"It is fancy; you forget, I am romantic about fathers."

The hint was enough for Dick; he consented with haste, and full of hang-dog penitence and disgust, took her down by a back way and planted her in the shrubbery, whence she might see the squire ride by to dinner. There they both sat silent, but holding hands, for nearly half an hour. At last the trotting of a horse sounded in the distance, the park gates opened with a clang, and then Mr. Naseby appeared, with stooping shoulders and a heavy, bilious countenance, languidly rising to the trot. Esther recognized him at once; she had often seen him before, though with her huge indifference for all that lay outside the circle of her love, she had never so much as wondered who he was; but now she recognized him, and found him ten years older, leaden and springless, and stamped by an abiding sorrow.

"Oh Dick, Dick!" she said, and the tears began to shine upon her face as she hid it in his bosom; his own fell thickly too. They had a sad walk home, and that night, full of love and good counsel, Dick exerted every art to please his father, to convince him of his respect and affection, to heal up this breach of kindness, and reunite two hearts. But alas! the squire was sick and peevish; he had been all day glooming over Dick's estrangement—for so he put it to himself, and now with growls, cold words, and the cold shoulder, he beat off all advances, and entrenched himself in a just resentment.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE PRODIGAL FATHER MAKES HIS DEBUT AT HOME.

THAT took place upon a Tuesday. On the Thursday following, as Dick was walking by appointment, earlier than usual, in the direction of the cottage, he was appalled to meet in the lane a fly from Thymebury, containing the human form of Miss M'Glashan. The lady did not deign to remark him in her passage, her face was suffused with tears, and expressed much concern for the packages by which she was surrounded. He stood still, and asked himself what this circumstance might portend. It was so beautiful a day that he was loth to forecast evil, yet something must perforce have happened at the cottage, and that of a decisive nature; for here was Miss M'Glashan on her travels, with a small patrimony in brown paper parcels, and the old lady's bearing implied hot battle and unqualified defeat. Was the house to be closed against him? Was Esther left alone, or had some new protector made his appearance from among the millions of Europe? It is the character of love to loathe the near relatives of the loved one; chapters in the history of the human race have justified this feeling, and the conduct of uncles, in particular, has frequently met with censure from the independent novelist. Miss M'Glashan was now seen in the rosy colors of regret; whoever succeeded her, Dick felt the change would be for the worse. He hurried forward in this spirit; his anxiety grew upon him with every step; as he entered the garden a voice fell upon his ear, and he was once more arrested, not this time by doubt, but by indubitable certainty of ill.

The thunderbolt had fallen; the Admiral was here.

Dick would have retreated, in the panic

terror of the moment; but Esther kept a bright look-out when her lover was expected. In a twinkling she was by his side, brimful of news and pleasure, too glad to notice his embarrassment, and in one of those golden transports of exaltation which transcend not only words but caresses. She took him by the end of the fingers (reaching forward to take them, for her great preoccupation was to save time), she drew him towards her, pushed him past her in the door, and planted him face to face with Mr. Van Tromp, in a suit of French country velveteens and with a remarkable carbuncle on his nose. Then, as though this was the end of what she could endure in the way of joy, Esther turned and ran out of the room.

The two men remained looking at each other with some confusion on both sides. Van Tromp was naturally the first to recover; he put out his hand with a fine gesture.

"And you know my little lass, my Esther?" he said. "This is pleasant, this is what I have conceived of home. A strange word for the old rover; but we all have a taste for home and the homelike, disguise it how we may. It has brought me here, Mr. Naseby," he concluded, with an intonation that would have made his fortune on the stage, so just, so sad, so dignified, so like a man of the world and a philosopher, "and you see a man who is content."

"I see," said Dick.

"Sit down," continued the parasite, setting the example. "Fortune has gone against me. (I am just sirrupping a little brandy—after my journey.) I was going down, Mr. Naseby; between you and me, I was *décavé*; I borrowed fifty francs, smuggled my valise past the concierge—a work of considerable tact—and here I am!"

"Yes," said Dick; "and here you are." He was quite idiotic.

Esther at this moment, re-entered the room.

"Are you glad to see him?" she whispered in his ear, the pleasure in her voice almost bursting through the whisper into song.

"Oh, yes," said Dick, "very."

"I knew you would be," she replied; "I told him how you loved him."

"Help yourself," said the Admiral, "help yourself; and let us drink to a new existence."

"To a new existence," repeated Dick; and he raised the tumbler to his lips, but

set it down untasted. He had had enough of novelties for one day.

Esther was sitting on a stool beside her father's feet, holding her knees in her arms, and looking with pride from one to the other of her two visitors. Her eyes was so bright that you were never sure if there were tears in them or not; little voluptuous shivers ran about her body; sometimes she nestled her chin into her throat, sometimes threw back her head, with ecstasy; in a word, she was in that state when it is said of people that they cannot contain themselves for happiness. It would be hard to exaggerate the agony of Richard.

And, in the mean time, Van Tromp ran on interminably.

"I never forget a friend," said he, "nor yet an enemy: of the latter, I never had but two—myself and the public; and I fancy I have had my vengeance pretty freely out of both." He chuckled. "But those days are done. Van Tromp is no more. He was a man who had successes; I believe you knew I had successes—to which we shall refer no farther," pulling down his neckcloth with a smile. "That man exists no more: by an exercise of will I have destroyed him. There is something like it in the poets. First, a brilliant and conspicuous career—the observed, I may say, of all observers, including the bum-bailly: and then, presto! a quiet, sly, old, rustic *bonhomme*, cultivating roses. In Paris, Mr. Naseby—"

"Call him Richard, father," said Esther.

"Richard, if he will allow me. Indeed, we are old friends, and now near neighbors; and *à propos*, how are we off for neighbors, Richard? The cottage stands, I think, upon your father's land—a family which I respect—and the wood, I understand, is Lord Trevanion's. Not that I care; I am an old Bohemian. I have cut society with a cut direct; I cut it when I was prosperous, and now I reap my reward, and can cut it with dignity in my declension. These are our little *amours propres*, my daughter: your father must respect himself. Thank you, yes; just a leetle, leetle, tiny—thanks, thanks; you spoil me. But, as I was saying, Richard, or was about to say, my daughter has been allowed to rust; her aunt was a mere duenna; hence, in parenthesis, Richard, her distrust of me; my nature and that of the duenna are poles asunder—poles! But, now that I am here, now that I have given up the fight, and live henceforth for one only of my works—I have the modesty to say it is my

best—my daughter—well, we shall put all that to rights. The neighbors, Richard?"

Dick was understood to say that there were many good families in the vale of Thyme.

"You shall introduce us," said the Admiral.

Dick's shirt was wet; he made a lumbering excuse to go; which Esther explained to herself by a fear of intrusion, and so set down to the merit side of Dick's account, while she proceeded to detain him.

"Before our walk?" she cried. "Never! I must have my walk."

"Let us all go," said the Admiral, rising.

"You do not know that you are wanted," she cried, leaning on his shoulder with a caress. "I might wish to speak to my old friend about my new father. But you shall come to-day, you shall do all you want; I have set my heart on spoiling you."

"I will just take *one* drop more," said the Admiral, stooping to help himself to brandy. "It is surprising how this journey has fatigued me. But I am growing old, I am growing old, I am growing old, and—I regret to add—bald."

He cocked a white wide-awake coquetishly upon his head—the habit of the lady-killer clung to him; and Esther had already thrown on her hat, and was ready, while he was still studying the result in a mirror: the carbuncle had somewhat painfully arrested his attention.

"We are papa, now; we must be respectable," he said to Dick, in explanation of his dandyism: and then he went to a bundle and chose himself a staff. Where were the elegant canes of his Parisian epoch? This was a support for age, and designed for rustic scenes. Dick began to see and appreciate the man's enjoyment in a new part, when he saw how carefully he had "made it up." He had invented a gait for this first country stroll with his daughter, which was admirably in key. He walked with fatigue; he leaned upon the staff; he looked round him with a sad, smiling sympathy on all that he beheld; he even asked the name of a plant, and rallied himself gently for an old town bird, ignorant of nature. "This country life will make me young again," he sighed. They reached the top of the hill towards the first hour of evening; the sun was descending heaven, the color had all drawn into the west; the hills were modelled in their least contour by the soft, slanting shine; and the wide



moorlands, veined with glens and hazel-woods, ran west and north in a hazy glory of light. Then the painter wakened in Van Tromp.

"Gad, Dick," he cried, "what value!"

An ode in four hundred lines would not have seemed so touching to Esther; her eyes filled with happy tears; yes, here was the father of whom she had dreamed, whom Dick had described; simple, enthusiastic, unworldly, kind, a painter at heart, and a fine gentleman in manner.

And just then the Admiral perceived a house by the wayside, and something depending over the house door which might be construed as a sign by the hopeful and thirsty.

"Is that," he asked, pointing with his stick, "an inn?"

There was a marked change in his voice, as though he attached importance to the inquiry: Esther listened, hoping she should hear wit or wisdom.

Dick said it was.

"You know it?" inquired the Admiral.

"I have passed it a hundred times, but that is all," replied Dick.

"Ah," said Van Tromp, with a smile, and shaking his head; "you are not an old campaigner; you have the world to learn. Now I, you see, find an inn so very near my own home, and my first thought is—my neighbors. I shall go forward and make my neighbor's acquaintance; no, you needn't come; I shall not be a moment."

And he walked off briskly towards the inn, leaving Dick alone with Esther on the road.

"Dick," she exclaimed, "I am so glad to get a word with you; I am so happy, I have such a thousand things to say; and I want you to do me a favor. Imagine, he has come without a paint-box, without an easel; and I want him to have all. I want you to get them for me in Thymebury. You saw, this moment, how his heart turned to painting. They can't live without it," she added; meaning perhaps Van Tromp and Michelangelo.

Up to that moment, she had observed nothing amiss in Dick's behavior. She was too happy to be curious; and his silence, in presence of the great and good being whom she called her father, had seemed both natural and praiseworthy. But now that they were alone, she became conscious of a barrier between her lover and herself, and alarm sprang up in her heart.

"Dick," she cried, "you don't love me."

"I do that," he said heartily.

"But you are unhappy; you are strange; you—you are not glad to see my father," she concluded, with a break in her voice.

"Esther," he said, "I tell you that I love you; if you love me, you know what that means, and that all I wish is to see you happy. Do you think I cannot enjoy your pleasures? Esther, I do. If I am uneasy, if I am alarmed, if— Oh, believe me, try and believe in me," he cried, giving up argument with perhaps a happy inspiration.

But the girl's suspicions were aroused; and though she pressed the matter no farther (indeed, her father was already seen returning), it by no means left her thoughts. At one moment she simply resented the selfishness of a man who had obtruded his dark looks and passionate language on her joy; for there is nothing that a woman can less easily forgive than the language of a passion which, even if only for the moment, she does not share. At another, she suspected him of jealousy against her father; and for that, although she could see excuses for it, she yet despised him. And at least, in one way or the other, here was the dangerous beginning of a separation between two hearts. Esther found herself at variance with her sweetest friend; she could no longer look into his heart and find it written with the same language as her own; she could no longer think of him as the sun which radiated happiness upon her life, for she had turned to him once, and he had breathed upon her black and chilly, radiated blackness and frost. To put the whole matter in a word, she was beginning, although ever so slightly, to fall out of love.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE PRODIGAL FATHER GOES ON FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH.

WE will not follow all the steps of the Admiral's return and installation, but hurry forward towards the catastrophe, merely chronicling by the way a few salient incidents, wherein we must rely entirely upon the evidence of Richard, for Esther to this day has never opened her mouth upon this trying passage of her life, and as for the Admiral—well, that naval officer, although still alive, and now more suitably installed in a seaport town where he has a telescope and a flag in his front garden, is incapable of throwing the slightest gleam of light upon the affair.



Often and often has he remarked to the present writer: "If I know what it was all about, sir, I'll be —" in short, be what I hope he will not. And then he will look across at his daughter's portrait, a photograph, shake his head with an amused appearance, and mix himself another grog by way of consolation. Once I have heard him go farther, and express his feelings with regard to Esther in a single but eloquent word. "A minx, sir," he said, not in anger, rather in amusement; and he cordially drank her health upon the back of it. His worst enemy must admit him to be a man without malice; he never bore a grudge in his life, lacking the necessary taste and industry of attention.

Yet it was during this obscure period that the drama was really performed; and its scene was in the heart of Esther, shut away from all eyes. Had this warm, upright, sullen girl been differently used by destiny, had events come upon her even in a different succession, for some things lead easily to others, the whole course of this tale would have been changed, and Esther never would have run away. As it was, through a series of acts and words of which we know but few, and a series of thoughts which any one may imagine for himself, she was awakened in four days from the dream of a life.

The first tangible cause of disenchantment was when Dick brought home a painter's arsenal on Friday evening. The Admiral was in the chimney-corner, once more "sirrugging" some brandy and water, and Esther sat at the table at work. They both came forward to greet the new arrival; and the girl, relieving him of his monstrous burthen, proceeded to display her offerings to her father. Van Tromp's countenance fell several degrees; he became quite querulous.

"God bless me," he said; and then, "I must really ask you not to interfere, child," in a tone of undisguised hostility.

"Father," she said, "forgive me; I knew you had given up your art —"

"Oh, yes!" cried the Admiral; "I've done with it to the judgment-day!"

"Pardon me again," she said firmly, "but I do not, I cannot think that you are right in this. Suppose this world is unjust, suppose that no one understands you, you have still a duty to yourself. And, oh, don't spoil the pleasure of your coming home to me; show me that you can be my father and yet not neglect your destiny. I am not like some daughters;

I will not be jealous of your art, and I will try to understand it."

The situation was odiously farcical. Richard groaned under it; he longed to leap forward and denounce the humbug. And the humbug himself? Do you fancy he was easier in his mind? I am sure, on the other hand, that he was acutely miserable; and he betrayed his sufferings by a perfectly silly and undignified access of temper, during which he broke his pipe in several pieces, threw his brandy and water in the fire, and employed words which were very plain although the drift of them was somewhat vague. It was of very brief duration. Van Tromp was himself again, and in a most delightful humor within three minutes of the first explosion.

"I am an old fool," he said frankly. "I was spoiled when a child. As for you, Esther, you take after your mother; you have a morbid sense of duty, particularly for others; strive against it, my dear — strive against it. And as for the pigments, well, I'll use them, some of these days; and to show that I'm in earnest, I'll get Dick here to prepare a canvas."

Dick was put to this menial task forthwith, the Admiral not even watching how he did, but quite occupied with another grog and a pleasant vein of talk.

A little after Esther arose, and making some pretext, good or bad, went off to bed. Dick was left hobbled by the canvas, and was subjected to Van Tromp for about an hour.

The next day, Saturday, it is believed that little intercourse took place between Esther and her father; but towards the afternoon Dick met the latter returning from the direction of the inn, where he had struck up quite a friendship with the landlord. Dick wondered who paid for these excursions, and at the thought that the reprobate must get his pocket money where he got his board and lodging, from poor Esther's generosity, he had it almost in his heart to knock the old gentleman down. He, on his part, was full of airs and graces and geniality.

"Dear Dick," he said, taking his arm, "this is neighborly of you; it shows your tact to meet me when I had a wish for you. I am in pleasant spirits; and it is then that I desire a friend."

"I am glad to hear you are so happy," retorted Dick bitterly. "There's certainly not much to trouble *you*."

"No," assented the Admiral, "not much. I got out of it in time; and here — well, here everything pleases me. I

am plain in my tastes. *A propos*, you have never asked me how I liked my daughter?"

"No," said Dick roundly; "I certainly have not."

"Meaning you will not. And why, Dick? She is my daughter, of course; but then I am a man of the world and a man of taste, and perfectly qualified to give an opinion with impartiality—yes, Dick, with impartiality. Frankly, I am not disappointed in her. She has good looks; she has them from her mother. So I may say I *chose* her looks. She is devoted, quite devoted to me —"

"She is the best woman in the world!" broke out Dick.

"Dick," cried the Admiral, stopping short; "I have been expecting this. Let us—let us go back to the Trevanion Arms, and talk this matter out over a bottle."

"Certainly not," went Dick. "You have had far too much already."

The parasite was on the point of resenting this; but a look at Dick's face, and some recollection of the terms on which they had stood in Paris, came to the aid of his wisdom and restrained him.

"As you please," he said; "although I don't know what you mean—nor care. But let us walk, if you prefer it. You are still a young man; when you are my age— But, however, to continue. You please me, Dick; you have pleased me from the first; and to say truth, Esther is a trifle fantastic, and will be better when she is married. She has means of her own, as of course you are aware. They come, like the looks, from her poor, dear, good creature of a mother. She was blessed in her mother. I mean she shall be blessed in her husband, and you are the man, Dick, you and not another. This very night I will sound her affections."

Dick stood aghast.

"Mr. Van Tromp, I implore you," he said; "do what you please with yourself, but, for God's sake, let your daughter alone."

"It is my duty," replied the Admiral, "and between ourselves, you rogue, my inclination too. I am as matchmaking as a dowager. It will be more discreet for you to stay away to-night. Farewell. You leave your case in good hands; I have the tact of these little matters by heart; it is not my first attempt."

All arguments were in vain; the old rascal stuck to his point; nor did Richard

conceal from himself how seriously this might injure his prospects, and he fought hard. Once there came a glimmer of hope. The Admiral again proposed an adjournment to the Trevanion Arms, and when Dick had once more refused, it hung for a moment in the balance whether or not the old toper would return there by himself. Had he done so, of course Dick could have taken to his heels, and warned Esther of what was coming, and of how it had begun. But the Admiral, after a pause, decided for the brandy at home, and made off in that direction.

We have no details of the sounding.

Next day the Admiral was observed in the parish church, very properly dressed. He found the places, and joined in response and hymn, as to the manner born; and his appearance, as he intended it should, attracted some attention among the worshippers. Old Naseby, for instance, had observed him.

"There was a drunken-looking black-guard opposite us in church," he said to his son as they drove home; "do you know who he was?"

"Some fellow—Van Tromp, I believe," said Dick.

"A foreigner, too!" observed the squire.

Dick could not sufficiently congratulate himself on the escape he had effected. Had the Admiral met him with his father, what would have been the result? And could such a catastrophe be long postponed? It seemed to him as if the storm were nearly ripe; and it was so more nearly than he thought.

He did not go to the cottage in the afternoon, withheld by fear and shame; but when dinner was over at Naseby House, and the squire had gone off into a comfortable doze, Dick slipped out of the room, and ran across country, in part to save time, in part to save his own courage from growing cold; for he now hated the notion of the cottage or the Admiral, and if he did not hate, at least feared to think of Esther. He had no clue to her reflections; but he could not conceal from his own heart that he must have sunk in her esteem, and the spectacle of her infatuation galled him like an insult.

He knocked and was admitted. The room looked very much as on his last visit, with Esther at the table and Van Tromp beside the fire; but the expression of the two faces told a very different story. The girl was paler than usual; her eyes were dark, the color seemed to have faded from round about them, and

her swiftest glance was as intent as a stare. The appearance of the Admiral, on the other hand, was rosy, and flabby, and moist; his jowl hung over his shirt collar, his smile was loose and wandering, and he had so far relaxed the natural control of his eyes, that one of them was aimed inward, as if to watch the growth of the carbuncle. We are warned against bad judgments; but the Admiral was certainly not sober. He made no attempt to rise when Richard entered, but waved his pipe flightily in the air, and gave a leer of welcome. Esther took as little notice of him as might be.

"Aha! Dick!" cried the painter. "I've been to church; I have, upon my word. And I saw you there, though you didn't see me. And I saw a devilish pretty woman, by Gad. If it were not for this baldness, and a kind of crapulous air I can't disguise from myself — if it weren't for this and that and t'other thing — I — I've forgot what I was saying. Not that that matters, I've heaps of things to say. I'm in a communicative vein to-night. I'll let out all my cats, even unto seventy times seven. I'm in what I call *the stage*, and all I desire is a listener, although he were deaf, to be as happy as Nebuchadnezzar."

Of the two hours which followed upon this it is unnecessary to give more than a sketch. The Admiral was extremely silly, now and then amusing, and never really offensive. It was plain that he kept in view the presence of his daughter, and chose subjects and a character of language that should not offend a lady. On almost any other occasion Dick would have enjoyed the scene. Van Tromp's egotism, flown with drink, struck a pitch above mere vanity. He became candid and explanatory; sought to take his auditors entirely into his confidence, and tell them his inmost conviction about himself. Between his self-knowledge, which was considerable, and his vanity, which was immense, he had created a strange hybrid animal, and called it by his own name. How he would plume his feathers over virtues which would have gladdened the heart of Cæsar or St. Paul; and anon, complete his own portrait with one of those touches of pitiless realism which the satirist so often seeks in vain!

"Now, there's Dick," he said, "he's shrewd; he saw through me the first time we met, and told me so — told me so to my face, which I had the virtue to keep. I bear you no malice for it, Dick; you were right; I am a humbug."

You may fancy how Esther quailed at this new feature of the meeting between her two idols.

And then, again, in a parenthesis, — "That," said Van Tromp, "was when I had to paint those dirty daubs of mine."

And a little further on, laughingly said perhaps, but yet with an air of truth: —

"I never had the slightest hesitation in sponging upon any human creature."

Thereupon Dick got up.

"I think perhaps," he said, "we had better all be thinking of going to bed." And he smiled with a feeble and deprecatory smile.

"Not at all," cried the Admiral, "I know a trick worth two of that. Puss here," indicating his daughter, "shall go to bed; and you and I will keep it up till all's blue."

Thereupon Esther arose in sullen glory. She had sat and listened for two mortal hours while her idol defiled himself and sneered away his godhead. One by one, her illusions had departed. And now he wished to order her to bed in her own house! now he called her puss! now, even as he uttered the words, toppling on his chair, he broke the stem of his tobacco pipe in three! Never did the sheep turn upon her shearer with a more commanding front. Her voice was calm, her enunciation a little slow, but perfectly distinct, and she stood before him as she spoke, in the simplest and most maidenly attitude.

"No," she said, "Mr. Naseby will have the goodness to go home at once, and you will go to bed."

The broken fragments of pipe fell from the Admiral's fingers; he seemed by his countenance to have lived too long in a world unworthy of him; but it is an odd circumstance, he attempted no reply, and sat thunderstruck, with open mouth.

Dick she motioned sharply towards the door, and he could only obey her. In the porch, finding she was close behind him, he ventured to pause and whisper, "You have done right."

"I have done as I pleased," she said. "Can he paint?"

"Many people like his paintings," returned Dick, in stifled tones; "I never did; I never said I did," he added, fiercely defending himself before he was attacked.

"I ask you if he can paint. I will not be put off. *Can he paint?*" she repeated.

"No," said Dick.

"Does he even like it?"

"Not now, I believe."

"And he is drunk?" — she leaned upon the word with hatred.

"He has been drinking."

"Go," she said, and was turning to re-enter the house when another thought arrested her. "Meet me to-morrow morning at the stile," she said.

"I will," replied Dick.

And then the door closed behind her, and Dick was alone in the darkness. There was still a chink of light above the sill, a warm, mild glow behind the window; the roof of the cottage and some of the banks and hazels were defined in denser darkness against the sky; but all else was formless, breathless, and noiseless like the pit. Dick remained as she had left him, standing squarely upon one foot and resting only on the toe of the other, and as he stood he listened with his soul. The sound of a chair pushed sharply over the floor startled his heart into his mouth; but the silence which had thus been disturbed settled back again at once upon the cottage and its vicinity. What took place during this interval is a secret from the world of men; but when it was over the voice of Esther spoke evenly and without interruption for perhaps half a minute, and as soon as that ceased heavy and uncertain footfalls crossed the parlor and mounted lurching up the stairs. The girl had tamed her father, Van Tromp had gone obediently to bed: so much was obvious to the watcher in the road. And yet he still waited, straining his ears, and with terror and sickness at his heart; for if Esther had followed her father, if she had even made one movement in this great conspiracy of men and nature to be still, Dick must have had instant knowledge of it from his station before the door; and if she had not moved, must she not have fainted? or might she not be dead?

He could hear the cottage clock deliberately measure out the seconds; time stood still with him; an almost superstitious terror took command of his faculties; at last, he could bear no more, and, springing through the little garden in two bounds, he put his face against the window. The blind, which had not been drawn fully down, left an open chink about an inch in height along the bottom of the glass, and the whole parlor was thus exposed to Dick's investigation. Esther sat upright at the table, her head resting on her hand, her eyes fixed upon the candle. Her brows were slightly bent, her mouth slightly open; her whole

attitude so still and settled that Dick could hardly fancy that she breathed. She had not stirred at the sound of Dick's arrival. Soon after, making a considerable disturbance amid the vast silence of the night, the clock lifted up its voice, whined for awhile like a partridge, and then eleven times hooted like a cuckoo. Still Esther continued immovable and gazed upon the candle. Midnight followed, and then one of the morning; and still she had not stirred, nor had Richard Naseby dared to quit the window. And then about half past one, the candle she had been thus intently watching flared up into a last blaze of paper, and she leaped to her feet with an ejaculation, looked about her once, blew out the light, turned round, and was heard rapidly mounting the staircase in the dark.

Dick was left once more alone to darkness and to that dulled and dogged state of mind when a man thinks that misery must now have done her worst, and is almost glad to think so. He turned and walked slowly towards the stile; she had told him no hour, and he was determined, whenever she came, that she should find him waiting. As he got there the day began to dawn, and he leaned over a hurdle and beheld the shadows flee away. Up went the sun at last out of a bank of clouds that were already disbanding in the east; a herald wind had already sprung up to sweep the leafy earth and scatter the congregated dew-drops. "Alas!" thought Dick Naseby, "how can any other day come so distastefully to me?" He still wanted his experience of the morrow.

#### CHAPTER VII.

##### THE ELOPEMENT.

It was probably on the stroke of ten, and Dick had been half asleep for some time against the bank, when Esther came up the road carrying a bundle. Some kind of instinct, or perhaps the distant light footfalls, recalled him, while she was still a good way off, to the possession of his faculties, and he half raised himself and blinked upon the world. It took him some time to re-collect his thoughts. He had awakened with a certain blank and childish sense of pleasure, like a man who had received a legacy overnight; but this feeling gradually died away, and was then suddenly and stunningly succeeded by a conviction of the truth. The whole story of the past night sprang into his mind with every detail, as

by an exercise of the direct and speedy sense of sight, and he arose from the ditch and, with rueful courage, went to meet his love.

She came up to him walking steady and fast, her face still pale, but to all appearance perfectly composed; and she showed neither surprise, relief, nor pleasure at finding her lover on the spot. Nor did she offer him her hand.

"Here I am," said he.

"Yes," she replied; and then, without a pause or any change of voice, "I want you to take me away," she added.

"Away?" he repeated. "How? Where?"

"To-day," she said. "I do not care where it is, but I want you to take me away."

"For how long? I do not understand," gasped Dick.

"I shall never come back here any more," was all she answered.

Wild words uttered, as these were, with perfect quiet of manner and voice, exercise a double influence on the hearer's mind. Dick was confounded; he recovered from astonishment only to fall into doubt and alarm. He looked upon her frozen attitude, so discouraging for a lover to behold, and recoiled from the thoughts which it suggested.

"To me?" he asked. "Are you coming to me, Esther?"

"I want you to take me away," she repeated with weary impatience. "Take me away — take me away from here."

The situation was not sufficiently defined. Dick asked himself with concern whether she were altogether in her right wits. To take her away, to marry her, to work off his hands for her support, Dick was content to do all this; yet he required some show of love upon her part. He was not one of those tough-hided and small-hearted males who would marry their love at the point of the bayonet rather than not marry her at all. He desired that a woman should come to his arms with an attractive willingness, if not with ardor. And Esther's bearing was more that of despair than that of love. It chilled him and taught him wisdom.

"Dearest," he urged, "tell me what you wish, and you shall have it; tell me your thoughts, and then I can advise you. But to go from here without a plan, without forethought, in the heat of a moment, is madder than madness, and can help nothing. I am not speaking like a man, but I speak the truth; and I tell you

again, the thing's absurd, and wrong, and hurtful."

She looked at him with a lowering, languid look of wrath.

"So you will not take me?" she said. "Well, I will go alone."

And she began to step forward on her way. But he threw himself before her.

"Esther, Esther!" he cried.

"Let me go — don't touch me — what right have you to interfere? Who are you, to touch me?" she flashed out, shrill with anger.

Then, being made bold by her violence, he took her firmly, almost roughly, by the arm, and held her while he spoke.

"You know well who I am, and what I am, and that I love you. You say I will not help you; but your heart knows the contrary. It is you who will not help me; for you will not tell me what you want. You see — or you could see, if you took the pains to look — how I have waited here all night to be ready at your service. I only asked information; I only urged you to consider; and I still urge and beg you to think better of your fancies. But if your mind is made up, so be it; I will beg no longer; I give you my orders; and I will not allow — not allow you to go hence alone."

She looked at him for a while with cold, unkind scrutiny like one who tries the temper of a tool.

"Well, take me away, then," she said with a sigh.

"Good," said Dick. "Come with me to the stables; there we shall get the pony trap and drive to the junction. To-night you shall be in London. I am yours so wholly that no words can make me more so; and, besides, you know it, and the words are needless. May God help me to be good to you, Esther — may God help me! for I see that you will not."

So, without more speech, they set out together, and were already got some distance from the spot, ere he observed that she was still carrying the hand-bag. She gave it up to him, passively, but when he offered her his arm, merely shook her head and pursed up her lips. The sun shone clearly and pleasantly; the wind was fresh and brisk upon their faces, and smelt racily of woods and meadows. As they went down into the valley of the Thyme, the babble of the stream rose into the air like a perennial laughter. On the far-away hill, sun-burst and shadow raced along the slopes and leaped from peak to peak. Earth, air, and water,



each seemed in better health and had more of the shrewd salt of life in them than upon ordinary mornings; and from east to west, from the lowest glen to the height of heaven, from every look and touch and scent, a human creature could gather the most encouraging intelligence as to the durability and spirit of the universe.

Through all this walked Esther, picking her small steps like a bird, but silent and with a cloud under her thick eyebrows. She seemed insensible, not only of nature, but of the presence of her companion. She was altogether engrossed in herself, and looked neither to right nor to left, but straight before her on the road. When they came to the bridge, however, she halted, leaned on the parapet, and stared for a moment at the clear, brown pool, and swift, transient snowdrift of the rapids.

"I am going to drink," she said; and descended the winding footpath to the margin.

There she drank greedily in her hands and washed her temples with water. The coolness seemed to break, for an instant, the spell that lay upon her; for, instead of hastening forward again in her dull, indefatigable tramp, she stood still where she was, for near a minute, looking straight before her. And Dick, from above on the bridge where he stood to watch her, saw a strange, equivocal smile dawn slowly on her face and pass away again at once and suddenly, leaving her as grave as ever; and the sense of distance, which it is so cruel for a lover to endure, pressed with every moment more heavily on her companion. Her thoughts were all secret; her heart was locked and bolted; and he stood without, vainly wooing her with his eyes.

"Do you feel better?" asked Dick, as she at last rejoined him; and after the constraint of so long a silence, his voice sounded foreign to his own ears.

She looked at him for an appreciable fraction of a minute ere she answered, and when she did, it was in the monosyllable — "Yes."

Dick's solicitude was nipped and frosted. His words died away on his tongue. Even his eyes, despairing of encouragement, ceased to attend on hers. And they went on in silence through Kirton hamlet, where an old man followed them with his eyes, and perhaps envied them their youth and love; and across the Ivy beck where the mill was splashing and grumbling low thunder to itself in the

chequered shadow of the dell, and the miller before the door was beating flour from his hands as he whistled a modulation; and up by the high spinney, whence they saw the mountains upon either hand; and down the hill again to the back courts and offices of Naseby House. Esther had kept ahead all the way, and Dick plodded obediently in her wake; but as they neared the stables, he pushed on and took the lead. He would have preferred her to await him in the road while he went on and brought the carriage back, but after so many repulses and rebuffs he lacked courage to offer the suggestion. Perhaps, too, he felt it wiser to keep his convoy within sight. So they entered the yard in Indian file, like a tramp and his wife.

The groom's eyebrows rose as he received the order for the pony phaeton, and kept rising during all his preparations. Esther stood bolt upright and looked steadily at some chickens in the corner of the yard. Master Richard himself, thought the groom, was not in his ordinary; for in truth, he carried the hand-bag like a talisman, and either stood listless, or set off suddenly walking in one direction after another with brisk, decisive footsteps. Moreover he had apparently neglected to wash his hands, and bore the air of one returning from a prolonged nutting ramble. Upon the groom's countenance there began to grow up an expression as of one about to whistle. And hardly had the carriage turned the corner and rattled into the high road with this inexplicable pair, than the whistle broke forth — prolonged, and low and tremulous; and the groom already so far relieved, vented the rest of his surprise in one simple English word, friendly to the mouth of Jack-tar and the sooty pitman, and hurried to spread the news round the servants' hall of Naseby House. Lunch-  
eon would be on the table in little beyond an hour; and the squire, on sitting down, would hardly fail to ask for Master Richard. Hence, as the intelligent reader can foresee, this groom has a part to play in the imbroglio.

Meantime, Dick had been thinking deeply and bitterly. It seemed to him as if his love had gone from him, indeed, yet gone but a little way; as if he needed but to find the right touch or intonation, and her heart would recognize him and be melted. Yet he durst not open his mouth, and drove in silence till they had passed the main park-gates and turned into the cross-cut lane along the wall. Then it

seemed to him as if it must be now, or never.

"Can't you see you are killing me?" he cried. "Speak to me, look at me, treat me like a human man."

She turned slowly and looked him in the face with eyes that seemed kinder. He dropped the reins and caught her hand, and she made no resistance although her touch was unresponsive. But when, throwing one arm round her waist he sought to kiss her lips, not like a lover indeed, not because he wanted to do so, but as a desperate man who puts his fortunes to the touch, she drew away from him, with a knot in her forehead, backed and shied about fiercely with her head, and pushed him from her with her hand. Then there was no room left for doubt, and Dick saw, as clear as sunlight, that she had a distaste or nourished a grudge against him.

"Then you don't love me?" he said, drawing back from her, he also, as though her touch had burnt him; and then, as she made no answer, he repeated with another intonation, imperious and yet still pathetic, "You don't love me, *do you, do you?*"

"I don't know," she replied. "Why do you ask me? Oh, how should I know? It has all been lies together—lies, and lies, and lies!"

He cried her name sharply, like a man who has taken a physical hurt, and that was the last word that either of them spoke until they reached Thymebury Junction.

This was a station isolated in the midst of moorlands, yet lying on the great up line to London. The nearest town, Thymebury itself, was seven miles distant along the branch they call the Vale of Thyme Railway. It was now nearly half an hour past noon, the down train had just gone by, and there would be no more traffic at the junction until half past three; when the local train comes in to meet the up express at a quarter before four. The stationmaster had already gone off to his garden, which was half a mile away in the hollow of the moor; a porter, who was just leaving, took charge of the phaeton, and promised to return it before night to Naseby House; only a deaf, snuffy, and stern old man remained to play propriety for Dick and Esther.

Before the phaeton had driven off, the girl had entered the station and seated herself upon a bench. The endless empty moorlands stretched before her, entirely unenclosed, and with no boundary but the

horizon. Two lines of rails, a wagon shed, and a few telegraph posts, alone diversified the outlook. As for sounds, the silence was unbroken save by the chant of the telegraph wires and the crying of the plovers on the waste. With the approach of midday the wind had more and more fallen, it was now sweltering hot and the air trembled in the sunshine.

Dick paused for an instant on the threshold of the platform. Then, in two steps, he was by her side and speaking almost with a sob.

"Esther," he said, "have pity on me. What have I done? Can you not forgive me? Esther, you loved me once—can you not love me still?"

"How can I tell you? How am I to know?" she answered. "You are all a lie to me—all a lie from first to last. You were laughing at my folly, playing with me like a child, at the very time when you declared you loved me. Which was true? was any of it true? or was it all, all a mockery? I am weary trying to find out. And you say I loved you; I loved my father's friend. I never loved, I never heard of, you, until that man came home and I began to find myself deceived. Give me back my father, be what you were before, and you may talk of love indeed!"

"Then you cannot forgive me—cannot?" he asked.

"I have nothing to forgive," she answered. "You do not understand."

"Is that your last word, Esther?" said he, very white and biting his lip to keep it still.

"Yes, that is my last word," replied she.

"Then we are here on false pretences, and we stay here no longer," he said. "Had you still loved me, right or wrong, I should have taken you away, because then I could have made you happy. But as it is—I must speak plainly—what you propose is degrading to you, and an insult to me, and a rank unkindness to your father. Your father may be this or that, but you should use him like a fellow-creature."

"What do you mean?" she flashed. "I leave him my house and all my money; it is more than he deserves. I wonder you dare speak to me about that man. And besides, it is all he cares for; let him take it, and let me never hear from him again."

"I thought you romantic about fathers," he said.

"Is that a taunt?" she demanded.

"No," he replied, "it is an argument. No one can make you like him, but don't disgrace him in his own eyes. He is old, Esther, old and broken down. Even I am sorry for him, and he has been the loss of all I cared for. Write to your aunt; when I see her answer you can leave quietly and naturally, and I will take you to your aunt's door. But in the mean time you must go home. You have no money, and so you are helpless, and must do as I tell you; and believe me, Esther, I do all for your good, and your good only, so God help me."

She had put her hand into her pocket and withdrawn it empty.

"I counted upon you," she wailed.

"You counted rightly then," he retorted. "I will not, to please you for a moment, make both of us unhappy for our lives; and since I cannot marry you, we have only been too long away, and must go home at once."

"Dick," she cried suddenly, "perhaps I might—perhaps in time—perhaps—"

"There is no perhaps about the matter," interrupted Dick. "I must go and bring the phaeton."

And with that he strode from the station, all in a glow of passion and virtue. Esther, whose eyes had come alive and her cheeks flushed during these last words, relapsed in a second into a state of petrification. She remained without motion during his absence, and when he returned suffered herself to be put back into the phaeton, and driven off on the return journey like an idiot or a tired child. Compared with what she was now, her condition of the morning seemed positively natural. She sat white and cold and silent, and there was no speculation in her eyes. Poor Dick flailed and flailed at the pony, and once tried to whistle, but his courage was going down; huge clouds of despair gathered together in his soul, and from time to time their darkness was divided by a piercing flash of longing and regret. He had lost his love—he had lost his love for good.

The pony was tired, and the hills very long and steep, and the air sultrier than ever, for now the breeze began to fail entirely. It seemed as if this miserable drive would never be done, as if poor Dick would never be able to go away and be comfortably wretched by himself; for all his desire was to escape from her presence and the reproach of her averted looks. He had lost his love, he thought—he had lost his love for good.

They were already not far from the

cottage, when his heart again faltered and he appealed to her once more, speaking low and eagerly in broken phrases.

"I cannot live without your love," he concluded.

"I do not understand what you mean," she replied, and I believe with perfect truth.

"Then," said he, wounded to the quick, "your aunt might come and fetch you herself. Of course you can command me as you please. But I think it would be better so."

"Oh yes," she said wearily, "better so."

This was the only exchange of words between them till about four o'clock; the phaeton, mounting the lane, "opened out" the cottage between the leafy banks. Thin smoke went straight up from the chimney; the flowers in the garden, the hawthorn in the lane, hung down their heads in the heat; the stillness was broken only by the sound of hoofs. For right before the gate a livery servant rode slowly up and down, leading a saddle horse. And in this last Dick shuddered to identify his father's chestnut.

Alas! poor Richard, what should this portend?

The servant, as in duty bound, dismounted and took the phaeton into his keeping; yet Dick thought he touched his hat to him with something of a grin. Esther, passive as ever, was helped out and crossed the garden with a slow and mechanical gait; and Dick, following close behind her, heard from within the cottage his father's voice upraised in an anathema, and the shriller tones of the Admiral responding in the key of war.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### BATTLE ROYAL.

SQUIRE NASEBY, on sitting down to lunch, had inquired for Dick, whom he had not seen since the day before at dinner; and the servant answering awkwardly that Master Richard had come back but had gone out again with the pony phaeton, his suspicions became aroused, and he cross-questioned the man until the whole was out. It appeared from this report that Dick had been going about for nearly a month with a girl in the vale—a Miss Van Tromp; that she lived near Lord Trevanion's upper wood; that recently Miss Van Tromp's papa had returned home from foreign parts after a prolonged absence; that this papa was an old gentleman, very chatty

and free with his money in the public house — whereupon Mr. Naseby's face became encrimsoned; that the papa, furthermore, was said to be an admiral — whereupon Mr. Naseby spat out a whistle brief and fierce as an oath; that Master Dick seemed very friendly with the papa — "God help him!" said Mr. Naseby; that last night Master Dick had not come in, and to-day he had driven away in the phaeton with the young lady —

"Young woman," corrected Mr. Naseby.

"Yes, sir," said the man, who had been unwilling enough to gossip from the first, and was now cowed by the effect of his communications on the master. "Young woman, sir!"

"Had they luggage?" demanded the squire.

"Yes, sir."

Mr. Naseby was silent for a moment, struggling to keep down his emotion, and he mastered it so far as to mount into the sarcastic vein, when he was in the nearest danger of melting into the sorrowful.

"And was this — this Van Dunk with them?" he asked, dwelling scornfully upon the name.

The servant believed not, and being eager to shift the responsibility of speech to other shoulders, suggested that perhaps the master had better inquire further from George the stableman in person.

"Tell him to saddle the chestnut and come with me. He can take the gray gelding; for we may ride fast. And then you can take away this trash," added Mr. Naseby, pointing to the luncheon; and he arose, lordly in his anger, and marched forth upon the terrace to await his horse.

There Dick's old nurse shrunk up to him, for the news went like wildfire over Naseby House, and timidly expressed a hope that there was nothing much amiss with the young master.

"I'll pull him through," the squire said grimly, as though he meant to pull him through a threshing-mill; "I'll save him from this gang; God help him with the next! He has a taste for low company, and no natural affections to steady him. His father was no society for him; he must go fuddling with a Dutchman, Nance, and now he's caught. Let us pray he'll take the lesson," he added more gravely, "but youth is here to make troubles, and age to pull them out again."

Nance whimpered and recalled several episodes of Dick's childhood, which moved Mr. Naseby to blow his nose and

shake her hard by the hand; and then, the horse arriving opportunely, to get himself without delay into the saddle and canter off.

He rode straight, hot spur, to Thymebury, where, as was to be expected, he could glean no tidings of the runaways. They had not been seen at the George; they had not been seen at the station. The shadow darkened on Mr. Naseby's face; the junction did not occur to him; his last hope was for Van Tromp's cottage; thither he bade George guide him, and thither he followed, nursing grief, anxiety, and indignation in his heart.

"Here it is, sir," said George, stopping.

"What! on my own land!" he cried. "How's this? I let this place to somebody — M'Whirter or M'Glashan."

"Miss M'Glashan was the young lady's aunt, sir, I believe," returned George.

"Ay — dummies," said the squire. "I shall whistle for my rent too. Here, take my horse."

The Admiral, this hot afternoon, was sitting by the window with a long glass. He already knew the squire by sight, and now, seeing him dismount before the cottage and come striding through the garden, concluded without doubt he was there to ask for Esther's hand.

"This is why the girl is not yet home," he thought: "a very suitable delicacy on young Naseby's part."

And he composed himself with some pomp, answered the loud rattle of the riding-whip upon the door with a dulcet invitation to enter, and coming forward with a bow and a smile, "Mr. Naseby, I believe," said he.

The squire came armed for battle; took in his man from top to toe in one rapid and scornful glance, and decided on a course at once. He must let the fellow see that he understood him.

"You are Mr. Van Tromp?" he returned roughly, and without taking any notice of the proffered hand.

"The same, sir," replied the Admiral. "Pray be seated."

"No sir," said the squire, point-blank, "I will not be seated. I am told that you are an admiral," he added.

"No sir, I am not an admiral," returned Van Tromp, who now began to grow nettled and enter into the spirit of the interview.

"Then why do you call yourself one, sir?"

"I have to ask your pardon, I do not," says Van Tromp, as grand as the pope.

But nothing was of avail against the squire.

"You sail under false colors from beginning to end," he said. "Your very house was taken under a sham name."

"It is not my house. I am my daughter's guest," replied the Admiral. "If it were my house —"

"Well?" said the squire, "what then? hey?"

The Admiral looked at him nobly, but was silent.

"Look here," said Mr. Naseby, "this intimidation is a waste of time; it is thrown away on me, sir; it will not succeed with me. I will not permit you even to gain time by your fencing. Now, sir, I presume you understand what brings me here."

"I am entirely at a loss to account for your intrusion," bows and waves Van Tromp.

"I will try to tell you then. I come here as a father" — down came the riding-whip upon the table — "I have right and justice upon my side. I understand your calculations, but you calculated without me. I am a man of the world, and I see through you and your manœuvres. I am dealing now with a conspiracy — I stigmatize it as such, and I will expose it and crush it. And now I order you to tell me how far things have gone, and whither you have smuggled my unhappy son."

"My God, sir!" Van Tromp broke out, "I have had about enough of this. Your son? God knows where he is for me! What the devil have I to do with your son? My daughter is out, for the matter of that; I might ask you where she was, and what would you say to that? But this is all midsummer madness. Name your business distinctly, and be off."

"How often am I to tell you?" cried the squire. "Where did your daughter take my son to-day in that cursed pony carriage?"

"In a pony carriage?" repeated Van Tromp.

"Yes, sir — with luggage."

"Luggage?" Van Tromp had turned a little pale.

"Luggage, I said — luggage!" shouted Naseby. "You may spare me this dissimulation. Where's my son? You are speaking to a father, sir, a father."

"But, sir, if this be true," out came Van Tromp in a new key, "it is I who have an explanation to demand."

"Precisely. There is the conspiracy," retorted Naseby. "Oh!" he added, "I

am a man of the world. I can see through and through you."

Van Tromp began to understand.

"You speak a great deal about being a father, Mr. Naseby," said he; "I believe you forget that the appellation is common to both of us. I am at a loss to figure to myself, however dimly, how any man — I have not said any gentleman — could so brazenly insult another as you have been insulting me since you entered this house. For the first time I appreciate your base insinuations, and I despise them and you. You were, I am told, a manufacturer; I am an artist; I have seen better days; I have moved in societies where you would not be received, and dined where you would be glad to pay a pound to see me dining. The so-called aristocracy of wealth, sir, I despise. I refuse to help you; I refuse to be helped by you. There lies the door."

And the Admiral stood forth in a halo.

It was then that Dick entered. He had been waiting in the porch for some time back, and Esther had been listlessly standing by his side. He had put out his hand to bar her entrance, and she had submitted without surprise; and though she seemed to listen, she scarcely appeared to comprehend. Dick, on his part, was as white as a sheet; his eyes burned and his lips trembled with anger as he thrust the door suddenly open, introduced Esther with ceremonious gallantry, and stood forward and knocked his hat firmer on his head like a man about to leap.

"What is all this?" he demanded.

"Is this your father, Mr. Naseby?" inquired the Admiral.

"It is," said the young man.

"I make you my compliments," returned Van Tromp.

"Dick!" cried his father, suddenly breaking forth, "it is not too late, is it? I have come here in time to save you. Come, come away with me — come away from this place."

And he fawned upon Dick with his hands.

"Keep your hands off me," cried Dick, not meaning unkindness, but because his nerves were shattered by so many successive miseries.

"No, no," said the old man, "don't repulse your father, Dick, when he has come here to save you. Don't repulse me, my boy. Perhaps I have not been kind to you, not quite considerate, too harsh; my boy, it was not for want of love. Think of old times. I was kind to you then, was I not? When you were a



child, and your mother was with us." Mr. Naseby was interrupted by a sort of sob. Dick stood looking at him in a maze. "Come away," pursued the father in a whisper; "you need not be afraid of any consequences. I am a man of the world, Dick; and she can have no claim on you — no claim, I tell you; and we'll be handsome too, Dick — we'll give them a good round figure, father and daughter, and there's an end."

He had been trying to get Dick towards the door, but the latter stood off.

"You had better take care, sir, how you insult that lady," said the son, as black as night.

"You would not choose between your father and your mistress?" said the father.

"What do you call her, sir?" cried Dick, high and clear.

Forbearance and patience were not among Mr. Naseby's qualities.

"I called her your mistress," he shouted, "and I might have called her a —"

"That is an unmanly lie," replied Dick, slowly.

"Dick!" cried the father, "Dick!"

"I do not care," said the son, strengthening himself against his own heart; "I — I have said it, and it is the truth."

There was a pause.

"Dick," said the old man at last, in a voice that was shaken as by a gale of wind, "I am going. I leave you with your friends, sir — with your friends. I came to serve you, and now I go away a broken man. For years I have seen this coming, and now it has come. You never loved me. Now you have been the death of me. You may boast of that. Now I leave you. God pardon you."

With that he was gone; and the three who remained together heard his horse's hoofs descend the lane. Esther had not made a sign throughout the interview, and still kept silence now that it was over; but the Admiral, who had once or twice moved forward and drawn back again, now advanced for good.

"You are a man of spirit, sir," said he to Dick; "but though I am no friend to parental interference, I will say that you were heavy on the governor." Then he added with a chuckle: "You began, Richard, with a silver spoon, and here you are in the water like the rest. Work, work, nothing like work. You have parts, you have manners; why, with application, you may die a millionaire!"

Dick shook himself. He took Esther by the hand, looking at her mournfully.

"Then this is farewell," he said.

"Yes," she answered. There was no tone in her voice, and she did not return his gaze.

"Forever," added Dick.

"Forever," she repeated mechanically.

"I have had hard measure," he continued. "In time I believe I could have shown you I was worthy, and there was no time long enough to show how much I loved you. But it was not to be. I have lost all."

He relinquished her hand, still looking at her, and she turned to leave the room.

"Why, what in fortune's name is the meaning of all this?" cried Van Tromp.

"Esther, come back!"

"Let her go," said Dick, and he watched her disappear with strangely mingled feelings. For he had fallen into that stage when men have the vertigo of misfortune, court the strokes of destiny, and rush towards anything decisive, that it may free them from suspense though at the cost of ruin. It is one of the many minor forms of suicide.

"She did not love me," he said, turning to her father.

"I feared as much," said he, "when I sounded her. Poor Dick, poor Dick. And yet I believe I am as much cut up as you are. I was born to see others happy."

"You forget," returned Dick, with something like a sneer, "that I am now a pauper."

Van Tromp snapped his fingers.

"Tut!" said he; "Esther has plenty for us all."

Dick looked at him with some wonder. It had never dawned upon him that this shiftless, thriftless, worthless, sponging parasite was yet, after and in spite of all, not mercenary in the issue of his thoughts; yet so it was.

"Now," said Dick, "I must go."

"Go?" cried Van Tromp. "Where? Not one foot, Mr. Richard Naseby. Here you shall stay in the mean time! and — well, and do something practical — advertise for a situation as private secretary — and when you have it, go and welcome. But in the mean time, sir, no false pride; we must stay with our friends; we must sponge a while on Papa Van Tromp, who has sponged so often upon us."

"By God," cried Dick, "I believe you are the best of the lot."

"Dick, my boy," replied the Admiral, winking, "you mark me, I am not the worst."

"Then why," began Dick, and then

paused. "But Esther," he began again, once more to interrupt himself. "The fact is, Admiral," he came out with it roundly now, "your daughter wished to run away from you to-day, and I only brought her back with difficulty."

"In the pony carriage?" asked the Admiral, with the silliness of extreme surprise.

"Yes," Dick answered.

"Why, what the devil was she running away from?"

Dick found the question unusually hard to answer.

"Why," said he, "you know, you're a bit of a rip."

"I behave to that girl, sir, like an arch-deacon," replied Van Tromp warmly.

"Well—excuse me—but you know you drink," insisted Dick.

"I know that I was a sheet in the wind's eye, sir, once—once only, since I reached this place," retorted the Admiral. "And even then I was fit for any drawing-room. I should like you to tell me how many fathers, lay and clerical, go up-stairs every day with a face like a lobster and cod's eyes—and are dull, upon the back of it—not even mirth for the money! No, if that's what she runs for, all I say is, let her run."

"You see," Dick tried it again, "she has fancies——"

"Confound her fancies!" cried Van Tromp. "I used her kindly; she had her own way; I was her father. Besides I had taken quite a liking to the girl, and meant to stay with her for good. But I tell you what it is, Dick, since she has trifled with you—oh, yes, she did though!—and since her old papa's not good enough for her—the devil take her, say I."

"You will be kind to her at least?" said Dick.

"I never was unkind to a living soul," replied the Admiral. "Firm I can be, but not unkind."

"Well," said Dick, offering his hand, "God bless you, and farewell."

The Admiral swore by all his gods he should not go. "Dick," he said, "you are a selfish dog; you forget your old Admiral. You wouldn't leave him alone, would you?"

It was useless to remind him that the house was not his to dispose of, that being a class of considerations to which his intelligence was closed; so Dick tore himself off by force, and shouting a good-bye, made off along the lane to Thymebury.

## CHAPTER IX.

IN WHICH THE LIBERAL EDITOR REAPPEARS AS "DEUS EX MACHINA."

It was perhaps a week later, as old Mr. Naseby sat brooding in his study, that there was shown in upon him, on urgent business, a little hectic gentleman shabbily attired.

"I have to ask pardon for this intrusion, Mr. Naseby," he said; "but I came here to perform a duty. My card has been sent in, but perhaps you may not know, what it does not tell you, that I am the editor of the *Thymebury Star*."

Mr. Naseby looked up indignant.

"I cannot fancy," he said, "that we have much in common to discuss."

"I have only a word to say—one piece of information to communicate. Some months ago, we had—you will pardon my referring to it, it is absolutely necessary—but we had an unfortunate difference as to facts."

"Have you come to apologize?" asked the squire, sternly.

"No, sir; to mention a circumstance. On the morning in question, your son, Mr. Richard Naseby——"

"I do not permit his name to be mentioned."

"You will, however, permit me," replied the editor.

"You are cruel," said the squire. He was right, he was a broken man.

Then the editor described Dick's warning visit; and how he had seen in the lad's eye that there was a thrashing in the wind, and had escaped through pity only—so the editor put it—"through pity only, sir. And oh, sir," he went on, "if you had seen him speaking up for you, I am sure you would have been proud of your son. I know I admired the lad myself, and indeed that's what brings me here?"

"I have misjudged him," said the squire.

"Do you know where he is?"

"Yes, sir, he lies sick at Thymebury."

"You can take me to him?"

"I can."

"I pray God he may forgive me," said the father.

And he and the editor made post-haste for the county town.

Next day the report went abroad that Mr. Richard was reconciled to his father and had been taken home to Naseby House. He was still ailing, it was said, and the squire nursed him like the proverbial woman. Rumor, in this instance, did no more than justice to the truth;

and over the sick bed many confidences were exchanged, and clouds that had been growing for years passed away in a few hours, and, as fond mankind loves to hope, forever. Many long talks had been fruitless in external action, though fruitful for the understanding of the pair; but at last, one showery Tuesday, the squire might have been observed upon his way to the cottage in the lane.

The old gentleman had arranged his features with a view to self-command, rather than external cheerfulness; and he entered the cottage on his visit of conciliation with the bearing of a clergyman come to announce a death.

The Admiral and his daughter were both within, and both looked upon their visitor with more surprise than favor.

"Sir," said he to Van Tromp, "I am told I have done you much injustice."

There came a little sound in Esther's throat, and she put her hand suddenly to her heart.

"You have, sir; and the acknowledgment suffices," replied the Admiral. "I am prepared, sir, to be easy with you, since I hear you have made it up with my friend Dick. But let me remind you that you owe some apologies to this young lady also."

"I shall have the temerity to ask for more than her forgiveness," said the squire. "Miss Van Tromp," he continued, "once I was in great distress, and knew nothing of you or your character; but I believe you will pardon a few rough words to an old man who asks forgiveness from his heart. I have heard much of you since then; for you have a fervent advocate in my house. I believe you will understand that I speak of my son. He is, I regret to say, very far from well; he does not pick up as the doctors had expected; he has a great deal upon his mind, and, to tell the truth, my girl, if you won't help us, I am afraid I shall lose him. Come now, forgive him! I was angry with him once myself, and I found I was in the wrong. This is only a misunderstanding, like the other, believe me; and with one kind movement, you may give happiness to him, and to me, and to yourself."

Esther made a movement towards the door, but long before she reached it she had broken forth sobbing.

"It is all right," said the Admiral; "I understand the sex. Let me make you my compliments, Mr. Naseby."

The squire was too much relieved to be angry.

"My dear," said he to Esther, "you must not agitate yourself."

"She had better go up and see him right away," suggested Van Tromp.

"I had not ventured to propose it," replied the squire. "*Les convenances*, I believe —"

"*Je m'en fiche*," cried the Admiral, snapping his fingers. "She shall go and see my friend Dick. Run and get ready, Esther."

Esther obeyed.

"She has not — has not run away again?" inquired Mr. Naseby, as soon as she was gone.

"No," said Van Tromp, "not again. She is a devilish odd girl though, mind you that."

"But I cannot stomach the man with the carbuncles," thought the squire.

And this is why there is a new household and a brand-new baby in Naseby Dower House; and why the great Van Tromp lives in pleasant style upon the shores of England; and why twenty-six individual copies of the *Thymebury Star* are received daily at the door of Naseby House.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

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From Blackwood's Magazine.  
SYRIA.

#### ROUND ABOUT DAMASCUS.

The first part of the road from Mukhtara to Damascus is little better than a staircase. The faculty of climbing, which is inherent in Lebanon ponies, enables them to overcome difficulties that would seem insurmountable in civilized countries; and although it was often necessary to dismount and drive my pony before me, he scrambled up the steep mountain-side like a goat, too well pleased to be rid of his burden to make any objections to the path he was called upon to travel. Even up here, amid overhanging rocks, and on the precipitous hillsides, every inch of available ground was cultivated, chiefly with vines. These are neither trellised nor dwarfed into standard bushes, but trailed over the rocks: the grapes are thus kept out of what little soil there is, and ripened by the heat of the stone.

This cultivation extended for about an hour, and ceased at the village of Khorabeh, the highest inhabited spot in the valley, and the limit of cultivation. Here I

found some traces of ancient ruins, the remains of walls composed of huge blocks of stone, some arches still standing, and all the indications of what may have been, in the time of the Crusaders, or possibly before that time, a frontier fort. We still had some more climbing to do before making a sharp descent into a wild, desolate valley; and then we found ourselves at the foot of the highest range of the Lebanon.

It was a long, dreary pull up the steep mountain-side, with nothing to relieve the fatigue except the views back over the country I had left. All around was bleak and barren: the path was so little traversed that it was a mere track; and I did not meet a soul after leaving Khoreb till I reached the first village, at the foot of the mountain, on the other side. At the summit of the pass, which I estimated at about six thousand feet above the level of the sea, I crossed a patch of snow, and then, with a last look westwards, eagerly pressed on to the view which I knew was awaiting me in the opposite direction.

The last few minutes before reaching the crest of a high mountain-range — when one has no idea of what is to be seen beyond — is always a period of most agreeable suspense and anticipation; and when the glorious panorama unfolds, and the extensive landscape bursts upon one in all its novelty and beauty, how amply does it compensate for the monotony and fatigue of the ascent! From the point where I was then standing, Coelesyria lay mapped out at my feet. To the right, the snowy peaks of Mount Hermon closed the prospect; and from its shoulder, stretching away northward, was the range of the Anti-Lebanon. Immediately below, the plain of the Buka'a, dotted with villages, and watered by the Litany, gradually tapered to the gorge by which that river forces its way to the sea through the Lebanon range, while it spread out, in all its rich luxuriance, in the opposite direction, as far as Baalbec, forty or fifty miles distant. Map in hand, I could recognize every village, and stood no longer in need of a guide — though I kept him with me — for my night quarters, though still distant, were almost visible. Then we plunged down the precipitous descent, and once more found ourselves in the midst of an abundant vegetation and a busy population. Travellers by the main road to Damascus and Baalbec are so familiar with the Buka'a that I will spare

them a description of it, though I descended upon it by a little-known route, and entered it to the south of the tourist's track.

After a delightful plunge in the turbid waters of the Litany — for the heat of the valley after the snow-tipped ridge struck so sharp a contrast that a bath was doubly grateful — I pushed on into the spurs of the Anti-Lebanon, reaching, a little before dark, the Christian village of Aithi, where I had some difficulty in finding accommodation. It was an inhospitable, uninviting place; and in this respect contrasted most unfavorably with the Druse quarters I had just left. The people first stared at me, and then quarrelled over me, the dispute being, so far as I could gather, who should *not* have the honor of entertaining me as a guest. After one or two vain attempts had been made to induce me to accept accommodation which an Irish pig would have scorned, I finally found my way to the best-looking house in the village, which turned out to be the sheikh's. As that dignity was absent, I was somewhat coldly regarded by the female part of his establishment, who, however, at last consented to put me up on the distinct understanding that I was not to turn them out of the only decent room in the house, but share it with them. This prospect was by no means tempting, considering the operation which one fat woman was performing upon the head of another, the generally "insect" look of the place, and the number of babies which were promiscuously lying about and squalling when they were not engaged in sustaining nature. So I wandered about helplessly, making vain attempts to force myself upon the hospitality — which was to be liberally paid for — of the owners of the best houses I could find; but I received nothing but grunts and scowls, until a dirty Greek priest, with an eye to the main chance, came to my rescue, and offered to turn all his women out of a relatively sweet apartment, have the mud floor watered, swept, and matted, and abandon it to me for my sole use and occupation for the night. I was thankful to close with the offer; and half-a-dozen women were soon busily engaged sweeping, cleaning, and cooking, while all the neighbors came in to stare at so unusual a visitor. As I had some difficulty, in the absence of any interpreter, in making myself understood, the priest, who was very voluble, and absorbed with a desire for imparting information, triumphantly announced that there was a Syrian school-

master in the village who could speak English, or, at all events, had been educated in a missionary school; and he shortly returned with a very ill-favored and unhealthy youth, who, on the strength of his advanced state of civilization, seized me by the hand, and loudly exclaimed, "Good morning!" though the sun was just then setting; then pulling out an English and Arabic pocket dictionary, and studying it for some time, he said, in a peremptory tone, "Can you eat a hen?" I had already, before his arrival, expressed my willingness to attempt this feat; but he was too proud of the tremendous effect his learning had produced on the bystanders to hide his talent under a bushel, and kept on repeating the question from time to time. It was his supreme effort. He said a good deal more, it is true, apparently under the impression that it was English, as he repeatedly referred to the book; but the sounds which he produced were inarticulate and vague; and he afterwards became so troublesome by his insistence that I should communicate with him by means of his dictionary, which he had great difficulty in reading, that I requested him to return to his pupils, if he had any. So far from his taking the hint, he established himself in my room for the evening; and even after I had politely pointed out the word "kick," as a hint that there were several ways of leaving a room, he resolutely declined to move until I showed him the point of my boot, and indicated, as good-naturedly as I could, by signs, the method of its application, when he went out in high dudgeon, and I heard him abusing me all down the street. I have since learned generally to detect at a glance Syrians who have received the advantages of a smattering of education, by the extraordinary insolence which distinguishes them, and a presumption and familiarity which are not at all justified by the very limited extent of their accomplishments. Other visitors I had who were by no means so offensive; and they sat and gossiped as I dined on "hen," and took me out and showed me the ruins of a Roman temple, in the centre of the village, manifesting a good deal of intelligent interest in their inquiries as to what its original use might have been. The chief industry of Aithi is pottery-ware; and jars and pitchers, made of the excellent clay in the neighborhood, find a ready market in Damascus.

As the village is more than three thousand feet above the level of the sea, and

I had still a slight ascent to make, the keen north wind struck chill when I started at six o'clock the following morning, though April was already far advanced. Crossing smooth, grassy hills, I came unexpectedly, in about an hour after leaving my quarters, upon remains, which I stopped a short time to examine. They are near a spring called Ain Kenia, and consist of ruined walls still standing to a height of three or four feet, composed of huge blocks of stone, and which apparently enclosed two temples, each twenty yards by sixteen. In one were two prostrate columns and a carved capital; in the other, two fragments of columns still standing. I have not been able to discover the Roman name of the town by which these ruins were evidently surrounded. Half an hour later, after traversing a pretty but poorly cultivated country, I reached the village of Jedeideh, on the Damascus road; and five hours later, found myself amid the shady groves on the banks of the Barada, and surrounded by all the indications of proximity to that queen of Oriental cities, Damascus.

I was detained three weeks in Damascus, and was not sorry to avail myself of the opportunity which my stay afforded, of making some excursions in the neighborhood. With a friend on a geological errand bent, I started one morning by the Aleppo gate, and following the broad road which leads to Homs and Hamath — and, if one follows it far enough, to Aleppo and Constantinople — reached in a couple of hours the large village of Duma. Here we met the *avant-garde* of a large caravan which was arriving from Baghdad; and I gazed with no little interest at the uncouth riders, who seemed as joyous as the crew of a ship just arriving in port after a long voyage. They had left the main body of the caravan behind them, while they went on to make preliminary preparations, and were, doubtless, eagerly anticipating the pleasure of plunging into the delights and dissipations of Damascus.

At an empty barrack a little beyond Duma the road to Aleppo and Palmyra turns to the north, while we continued on the Baghdad road, through richly cultivated country, though the gardens and fruit orchards which embosom Damascus here ceased; but the *merj* or irrigated plain, thickly populated, extends away to the "Meadow Lakes," some ten or twelve miles distant to the south-east. We skirted its northern margin, our road



leading us along the base of the sterile range of the Jebel Kalamûn.

Where the Aleppo road diverged, we passed a group of half-a-dozen well-mounted dervishes — not wild, fanatic-looking specimens of religious asceticism and mendicancy, but sleek, well-to-do men, well dressed and armed, their long guns swinging at their backs, their active horses showing signs of blood, and, in fact, their whole appearance so mundane and prosperous, that had it not been for the drab felt conical hats, like inverted flower-pots, which betrayed their calling, I should have supposed they were prosperous merchants. We galloped over the short grass pasture-land where wild liquorice was growing in great abundance, to the village of Adra, where a large number of the Agidat Arabs were encamped and pasturing their flocks. They are a sedentary tribe of amiable herdsmen; and we sent over to the tents for a guide to lead us to the particular part of the Jebel Abu Ata which we wished to investigate. In an hour and a half after leaving Adra, under the guidance of the Arab, we crossed an ancient watercourse leading to some extensive ruins which I had not time to visit, and reached a ruined khan. All cultivation had ceased, and we traversed a desert covered with flint, onyx, chalcedony, agate, and other pebbles which had been subjected to volcanic action. We scrambled over this difficult country till nightfall, along narrow *wadies*, up dry torrent-beds, and across serrated ridges. On one of these I perched myself while the sun was setting; and my friend was otherwise engaged, and revelled in a bath of color, as the slanting rays seemed literally to burnish the barren hillsides, and their shadows fell encroachingly on the richly tinted desert, which changed its hues as it receded, until its horizon was lost in the haze, out of which the burning heats of the day were fading. Below me, a little to the east, lay the village of Damer, the last permanently inhabited spot on this side of the Euphrates; beyond it stretched the illimitable desert; barely visible in a southerly direction was the water line of the marshy lakes called Bahret el' Atebeh, in which the ancient rivers of Damascus, Abana and Pharpar, lose themselves. Beyond them, again, is the long volcanic range of Tulûl el Safa, a series of extinct craters, visited for the first time by Captain Burton. They form the centre of a notoriously wild and lawless district, which the government has vainly at-

tempted to reduce to order by the establishment of a military post near a spot called the Derb el Ghazawât, or Road of the Robberies, on account of its insecurity; but it is a road nobody travels, as it leads nowhere: there is nothing beyond but unexplored desert, excepting the three interesting ruins of El Diyura, which are situated on its nearest margin. Looking in a south-westerly direction, the eye wandered over the broad green *merj*. An expanse of corn-field and pasture, and dotted with numerous villages and encampments, it is bounded by the low barren range of the Jebel-el-Aswad or Black Mountain, far behind which again, and a little more to the east, the lofty summits of the Jebel Druse, the home of half the Druse nation, bounded the prospect. To the west, the gardens of Damascus concealed all view of the glittering city which nestles in their shade, but contrasted wondrously in their soft coloring with the brilliant copper tints of the desert ranges by which they are surrounded. Behind all, majestic Hermon reared its snow-clad crests, glowing with crimson light, and so completing a panorama unrivalled in the richness of its hues, and the striking contrast which its principal features presented.

The village of Damer, which lay almost at my feet, is the point at which the Arab express courier, after a nine days' and nights' journey across the desert, delivers up his mail. The wild Bedouin who performs this dangerous, solitary, and fatiguing journey, rarely enters the two centres of Eastern civilization, between which he furnishes a means of communication. For him the fragrant gardens and well-stocked bazaars of Damascus have no attraction; or perhaps he fears that he might be seduced by them, and avoids the temptation. Be that as it may, he stops on the verge of the desert, at either end of his route, and swings on his lithe dromedary to and fro over its arid wastes, catching such snatches of rest as he may at the scattered oases and widely separated wells where he stops to refresh his camel. With the coppery sky scorching him by day, and the changeless blue above him at night; rarely knowing the shelter even of an Arab tent; carrying with him the dates and rice sufficient to last him for his journey; exposed to perils from thirst and sandstorms and predatory Arabs, to whom the fleet animal he rides is a sore temptation, — he is, without doubt, the most *bizarre* and exceptional postman in existence. One

wonders whether he has really ever fathomed the mystery of his occupation, or found out why he should thus be kept constantly oscillating between the opposite margins of the desert with a bag; whether he knows what is in the bag, or, if he does, can form any conception why people in Damascus should care to know what people are doing in Baghdad, for he can never have experienced the sensation of wanting either to receive or to send a letter. It is probably with a considerable feeling of scorn and contempt that he ministers to this morbid craving for imparting and receiving useless information. Then, again, what opportunities for profound reflection he enjoys! Rarely exchanging a word with his fellow-man, yet constantly battling with hidden dangers — always on the alert, and yet never varying the eternal monotony of sky and desert — the mystery of existence must present the problems which civilization has failed to fathom, in an entirely new light to him forever perched on the back of a dromedary. For all we know, he may have framed a theory of evolution depending on "environment," by which, when the fittest is called upon to survive, he may remain the sole representative of the human race. Meanwhile the types of the highest state of civilization, *blasés* with its discoveries, are driven to suicide, and find life monotonous because it is made up of "buttoning and unbuttoning;" but he who is never called upon to do either the one or the other, serenely leads the most monotonous existence of all. Yet no thought of self-destruction from ennui ever enters his mind as he jogs backwards and forwards over the dreary waste with the bag which he despises. Except possibly the gentlemen who prefer being stage-coachmen to any other existence, and daily leave the White Horse Cellar in all weathers throughout the London season, who is there who is likely to have attained to the calm elevation of his philosophy? And even these do not carry a post-bag.

It is sad to think that the day may not be far distant when the occupation of this interesting specimen of humanity will be gone; when the shrill scream of the locomotive, piercing the still air of night, will scare the jackals who now make it resound with their plaintive cries, and introduce the Baghdad postman to "the blessings of civilization," of which he has till now been deprived. Flying across the desert by the Euphrates Valley Railway, tightly wedged between a

set of cardsharps in a third-class carriage, he may possibly look back with a smile of pity to his dromedary days; but it is a question whether he will be a better or a wiser man, especially if to relieve the monotony of the journey his companions initiate him into the mysteries of their vocation, or make him its victim. Let us hope that his instinct may teach him, if he would "evolve" into higher conditions, to telegraph for his dromedary to meet him at the next station, and to fly upon it to the uttermost recesses of his beloved desert, where, once more encompassed by the serene atmosphere of philosophical contemplation, he may reflect that, though he heard much among his fellow-passengers of the "blessings" and the "vices" of civilization, there is still enough honesty left in Christendom to have refrained from the mockery of such a phrase as the "virtues of civilization." What relation may exist between its "vices" and its "blessings" is a subject which we recommend to the earnest and thoughtful consideration of the Baghdad postman.

We debated whether we should make for Damer as our night's quarters, or return in the dark to Adra. Had there been any certainty of meeting either of the Baghdad postmen, I should certainly have voted for the former alternative. I believe there are two of them — little, wizened, dried-up old men, who are supposed never to die. If a dead postboy used to be a curiosity, it is easy to imagine that the Baghdad and Damascus postmen should be still more immortal; but as the chances were against our finding either of these unique individuals at Damer, we decided to return to Adra, and ultimately reached the house of the sheikh, tolerably tired after fourteen hours in the saddle, on very limited sustenance, and quite ready, therefore, for dinner. What was our dismay to find, as we rode into the courtyard of his comfortable dwelling — for he was a well-to-do sheikh — that he was giving an entertainment in celebration of his daughter's wedding! The yard was full of a dancing, yelling crowd of *invités*; the roofs were thronged with female spectators, who also squatted on their heels round the court, and applauded the dances in which they were not allowed to take part. These consisted in the men forming a circle, or sometimes a half-circle, and pressing against each other as closely as possible, so that the movement of the ring should be absolutely simultaneous, and then

dancing round in measured and somewhat monotonous step. The music was composed of drums and pipes, and made a deafening and most discordant clamor. As the musicians changed the time, new steps were introduced, but none of them were graceful; and considering that it was ten o'clock at night, and we were famishing for want of food, we did not regard the performance with the interest and admiration that we should have shown under the pleasing influences of digestion.

At last the inevitable *pillaff* and *leben*, or sour milk, made their appearance, and we formed a rival attraction to the dancers, as we proceeded to dispose of our meal in the presence of the company. It was no use attempting to go to sleep until the entertainment was at an end; and it was past midnight before we were enabled to stretch our weary limbs on the coverlets that had been spread on the floor, and seek repose in peace and quiet, except from fleas.

In the morning there arrived a fantastic dervish armed with a whip, and a boy dressed as a girl with castanets, and two musicians with a drum and a sort of banjo, and their performances soon attracted a crowd, though they were neither refined nor edifying. The boy was dressed and danced very much after the manner of a nautch girl in India, only rather "more so," while the dervish cracked his whip and acted the part of a somewhat immoral buffoon—so we were not tempted to linger longer than was absolutely necessary to swallow our morning coffee; and bidding adieu to the happy father of the bride, who had treated us with the greatest hospitality, we turned our faces homewards, and the same afternoon reached Damascus.

Mrs. Burton, in her charming work, "Inner Life in Syria," has described so fully the fascination which clings to this patriarch among the cities of the earth, that she has left little to the traveller whose experiences have been limited to weeks instead of years. But even in that short time he becomes conscious of an aroma, if one may so express it, peculiar to itself,—a halo of mysticism, as well as of antiquity, which seems to pervade its fountained courts, its mazy bazaars, its fragrant groves, its rushing waters, and surrounding ruins. It is a concentration of what Kinglake calls "the splendor and the havoc of the East;" and if its fading splendor and present havoc fail to furnish the key to the mystery of its long exist-

ence, they at least invest it with an unrivalled charm of association, carrying us back to the days when the traditions of religion are lost in obscurity, and arts were professed, and mysteries practised, which in these days would be deemed superstitious, but which in olden time formed the foundations upon which men's theological belief was built. As it has been at all times a centre of occult knowledge, I was anxious to learn its existing phase; and though my opportunities were too limited to enable me to make inquiries in the particular direction in which I had reason to believe facts of interest were to be discovered, I succeeded by means of the police in making the acquaintance of a personage of some celebrity in his way. This was a certain sheikh Ruslan Aboutou, who lived in a quarter of Damascus known as the Meidan. It is a curious projection from the city extending for a mile and a half in a southerly direction in a long narrow line like the handle of a frying-pan—supposing the pan to represent the city itself—and owes its shape and existence, doubtless, to the fact that by this road the *haj* or pilgrimage leaves Damascus for Mecca, and so shops, and dwellings, and storehouses have sprung up on each side of it, until they terminate at the Bawwabet Allah or God's gate. Here dwell a most strange assortment of characters. There are dervishes and the hangers of the *haj*, Arabs from the desert, Druses from the Hauran, Molahs, and corn merchants—for it is a great grain depot—tumble-down dwellings of vast dimensions and ghostly in their dilapidation, mosques and low-class *hammams* and cheap khans; while strings of camels arriving from distant oases, accompanied by wild-looking Bedouins, mingle with flocks of sheep driven by Kurd shepherds. On the right-hand side of the street, which is unusually broad, and about half-way down it, was situated the house of the sheikh—an unpretentious building with a small courtyard, in which were two or three orange-trees, and overlooked by the flat roofs of the neighboring houses. We arrived here one afternoon, a somewhat larger party than was wise, perhaps, considering the nature of the spectacle that was reserved for us; but the attraction proved too tempting for some ladies who were visiting Damascus to withstand, though it is not likely they will ever repeat the experiment. The sheikh received us at the door of his courtyard, which was already tolerably full of native spectators, and of

persons who were to take part in the performances; while many veiled women, who had apparently got notice that the sheikh was going to exhibit his powers, crowded the surrounding roofs. We took our seats on a divan in an apartment, one side of which was open to the court, while from the others doors led into the house; from their slightly open chinks and cran- nies issued the murmur of women's voices. The sheikh himself was a tall, handsome man of about fifty, with a short, well-trimmed, iron-grey beard, a bright, intelligent eye, a somewhat hooked nose, and a mouth which, when he smiled, light- ed up his face with a decidedly pleasing expression.

After the usual preliminary politeness of pipes, sherbet, and coffee, he went into an inner room, and reappeared with a bundle of iron skewers, very much re- sembling those used by cooks for trussing meat. Beckoning to a wild-looking dervish stripped to the waist, whose wander- ing eye had an evil look in it which the rest of his countenance did not belie—in fact it was only redeemed from being vil- lanous by a sort of glare of insanity—he made him open his mouth, and proceeded with the utmost coolness to pass a skewer from the inside through each cheek, so that the points could be seen plainly pro- truding. He then performed a like op- eration on a remarkably handsome youth of about sixteen, whom I afterwards found was his son, and whose large, clear, hazel eye was calmly fixed on mine while his cheeks were being pierced, nor did a line of his countenance indicate that he was conscious of the slightest pain. Not a drop of blood flowed in either case. The two victims stood before us with their mouths pressed back, and the projecting skewers showing the points through their cheeks with as much apparent comfort as if it was the normal condition of their being. Leaving them in this attitude, the sheikh again disappeared into his room. This time he returned with a small square box, drawing back the sliding lid of which he extracted a scorpion of unusual size, its vicious tail curling and striking its own back as it writhed between his fin- gers. This he handed to another dervish, clothed and looking more in his right mind than his skewered comrade, who instantly dropped the lively reptile into his mouth, and crunched it with great apparent gusto. As he was as large as an ordinary land crab, it was a big mouth- ful, and seemed to whip up into a sort of lather as he chewed it. His countenance

as he went on munching was so impassive that I could not judge whether live scor- pion is nice or not: probably it is an acquired taste. Another dervish joined in the repast, and disposed of a smaller one with equal equanimity.

I now suggested that we were satisfied in regard to the skewers, and that the company generally would feel more com- fortable if they were extracted. It is decidedly unpleasant to have two men with their cheeks trussed staring at you while others are eating live scorpions. Their mouths were so pressed back that they seemed to be grinning inanely; but I should think the effect of a real joke would have been disagreeable. I longed to try and make them laugh, to see whether it would not hurt them; but there is probably no such thing as a dervish with a sense of humor, and an Arabic joke was beyond me. The sheikh, too, would probably have been offended, for he went through the whole performance with the greatest solemnity, taking long, deep inspirations as he muttered incanta- tions in which the name of Allah occurred frequently, before he touched the skewers; then with a dentist-like twitch he jerked them out. The points were bloodless, and the outside of the cheek showed only a slight induration, like that of a cicatrized wound; there was no redness or inflam- mation.

The sheikh now once more returned to his room and brought out a larger box, which he opened, and drew forth from it several snakes of all sizes. These began to wriggle about the floor in a disagree- able manner, with an overpowering attrac- tion apparently for the legs of foreigners. However, the sheikh charmed them in the usual manner, and they soon all curled up submissively; then taking one about two feet long by the tail, he held it up in a manner so tempting that it proved ir- resistible to a tall, perfectly insane-looking dervish, who was afflicted with a sort of St. Vitus's dance, and who, rushing for- ward out of the crowd, gave a loud yell, snatched the twisting snake out of the sheikh's hands with both of his, gave it a sudden violent jerk which snapped it in two, and plunged the bleeding and palpi- tating end into his mouth. This was a signal for a general scramble: the half- naked dervish who had been skewered seized hold of the other end, and secured at least six inches all to himself. The men who had eaten the scorpions joined in voraciously, and in two minutes the entire animal had disappeared, and the

human beings who had eaten it were wiping their bloody chops with much apparent relish. The tall St. Vitus's dance man, indeed, seemed to become intoxicated with delight or some other emotion, and went into a sort of convulsion, from which he was only restored by the most intense effort on the part of the sheikh, who seized his head between his hands, pressing it violently as he took long breaths, and the veins swelled in his forehead with the concentration of his magnetic or other forces, as he repeated the formula of incantation, and finally restored his disciple, of whom he was evidently proud, to comparative calm. With the exception of the skewer affair, there was nothing very wonderful in all this; for, after all, the power of a man to make a beast of himself may be pushed to a very considerable length before it becomes inexplicable, so I was relieved to see preparations for experiments of a different nature.

A brazier of burning charcoal was brought in, and the charcoal fanned into a blaze. The sheikh then went through an invocation, and suddenly with his bare feet jumped upon it and stood there for nearly a minute, the lurid flame curling round them. The moment he got off, the serpent-eaters rushed forward and filled their mouths with the red-hot charcoal, which was again fanned, the smell of burning flesh becoming powerful and sickening as they crunched the glowing morsels. Live coals are possibly the antidote to snakes after you have eaten them; but the general effect of all this strange diet was beginning to have a powerful influence upon the nerves of some of the lady spectators, who protested that they were unable to witness further horrors. A man now stepped forward, stripped to the waist, with a skin almost as fair as a European's. His face had none of that expression of fanatical insanity which characterized some of his fraternity, but was calm and somewhat commonplace. The sheikh reappeared armed with a skewer of larger dimensions than he had thrust through the cheeks of the first victims, to the end of which was attached a heavy iron ball, and proposed to run it through the man's throat from the front, bringing it out at the nape of his neck. At this there was a general scream of horror and dismay. In vain did the sheikh protest that the operation would be absolutely painless, and show us the indurated spots on the opposite sides of the man's neck through which

the instrument was in the habit of passing, while the man himself smiled with a bland expression of disappointment at being deprived of a pleasure to which he was apparently looking forward. The repugnance of some of our party was not to be overcome, and the sheikh turned with an expression of contempt to make preparations for what was to follow. Pushing the same dervish's waistcloth down an inch or two he revealed a row of cicatrices which made a semicircle extending round his body. He then drew a curved knife about eight inches long and nearly two broad from a sheath, and proposed to plunge it to the hilt in his stomach. It had a short wooden handle about four inches in length, and there was no possibility of the blade slipping back into the handle. But here again he was stopped by a cry of horror from the ladies. This time the man himself earnestly joined his protestations to those of the sheikh; his credit seemed at stake, as there were women on the housetops who began to chatter, and a general look of dissatisfaction on the part of the spectators in the courtyard. I examined both the scars and the knife. The former were thin, beautifully-healed incisions; the latter as sharp as a razor and of the finest steel. I am very sorry that veracity compels me to leave this most interesting experiment to the reader's imagination. The party had now made up their minds to leave the place, and seemed to have no other idea than a hurried escape from its precincts, so we made rather an ignominious exit, leaving the sheikh bewildered and somewhat indignant at our pusillanimous conduct.

I asked him, however, to pay me a visit on the following day, which he did, and I had a long and interesting conversation with him. He said he was the hereditary descendant of the founder of the order of Bedawi, of which he was now the spiritual chief, and which numbered about ten thousand dervishes. These were scattered throughout Islam, and claimed adherents in all classes of society. He named one of high rank. The order was secret to a great extent, and there were those who openly professed to belong to it, as well as those who could exercise the special powers which attach to it without its being generally known. The founder of the order was a certain sheikh Said Ahmed el Bedawi, who lived about five hundred years ago, was a Moslem of great reputation for sanctity, and is buried in the Church of the Crusaders at Tintah in



Egypt. The sheikh El Bedawi had been initiated into these mysteries, having naturally a wonderful faculty for acquiring them; but the present sheikh did not profess that they had originated with him. He said that the power to perform these wonders dated back to an unknown period, and came from still further east; and that it was the same power which had been exercised by the sages, seers, and magicians of the Bible and other sacred books: that such powers were not confined to his order, though they exercised them in a more wonderful manner than the other miracle-working sects. These consisted of the Sukki, founded by the sheikh Said Ibrahim; the Kilani, founded by the sheikh Awal-abd-el-Kader; and the Rifai, founded by the sheikh Ahmed el Rifai. He said that all these were good men and devout Moslems, and that the faculty which their disciples possessed depended upon the purity and morality of the lives which they led. It was not, however, necessary to be a Moslem in order to be a member of the order, though practically none but Moslems were members of it; but a belief in the sheikh Bedawi as the source of such power was absolutely necessary so far as his sect was concerned. I then asked him in regard to the rites of initiation, and his own experience and training. He said that from his earliest infancy he had been educated by his father, as he was then educating his son, to exercise the powers which were hereditary in the family; that they were to be cultivated by much intense prayer and concentration of will. He then repeated the prayers and modes of invocation. I think he had some suspicion that I might become a neophyte, so earnest was he in his definition of the necessary process. Drawing long and deep breaths, he muttered, or rather whispered, in an attitude of the most intense internal concentration, the formulæ. Becoming more and more abstracted as he did so, he said, as he stopped suddenly, that were he to go on a little longer he should fall into a trance; that when he was in a trance state he saw and conversed with the sheikh El Bedawi, but it was never permitted to him to reveal what passed at these spiritual interviews; that those who wished to become disciples must learn this method of prayer and concentration; that they must also swear to the seven nomothetical precepts of Mohammedanism, which are indeed purely ethical, and apply to all religions—and that they must rigidly practise these virtues; that they must

finally take the initiatory draught which imparted the healing power to the saliva, whereby incisions could be made and the flow of blood prevented by wetting the finger with the tongue and instantly pressing it on the wound. The draught was prepared by a cabalistic formula, which he wrote for me in my pocket-book, being inscribed on a piece of sugar, which was then melted in water, with the proper form of invocation. He declared that the water became thus charged with a special virtue, and imparted to the drinker healing powers, which he retained so long as he remained faithful to his vows. He admitted that these practices were not recognized by the Koran, and were even opposed in theory to the general teaching of Mohammedanism; but he said they were permitted for a special purpose, and this was to convince unbelievers that the powers claimed by seers and holy men of old were not mere fables, but were actual facts and the basis of the religious belief; that he was specially instructed never to exhibit his powers for the gratification of mere idle curiosity; and that if he attempted their manifestations from any but the highest motives, and in obedience to internal directions received from the sheikh Bedawi, they would prove fatal, but that when done in an orderly manner, and from a religious motive, they caused no pain and were attended with no danger. He further said that the peculiar strength of the Bedawi lay in their power of dealing with fire; and that if I would stay in Damascus long enough he would show me men go into a fiery furnace, which he had in his house for the purpose, and come out as unscathed as Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego after a similar experience.

I afterwards conversed with a very learned Moslem on the subject, who confirmed what the sheikh had said in regard to the innovation upon the pure precepts of his religion which such practices involved; but he remarked, somewhat slyly, "Where would Christianity be without the belief in the possibility of such powers? These men do not claim more than has been claimed at all times and in all religions, and they are necessary to prove to unbelievers that their creeds are not built upon fables; it is only natural that the power which established them upon these supernatural foundations should keep them alive by manifestations of the same character. Why should such exhibitions be permitted to start a religion and not be continued to

maintain its existence? The only reason why such powers die out of a religion which once possessed them is because the faith of its adherents has dwindled away. Hence Christianity can no longer exercise them, even though in your Bible it is said they should be retained; but Moslems, though no such promise is made to them, are able to prove to believers in the Koran that in the degree in which they practise its virtues can they manifest divine powers. Hence it is, that though I have nothing to do with such sects myself, I feel that they have their use, and I believe in the truth of their performances."

I met an English medical man afterwards who had lived all his life in the East, and who told me he had repeatedly seen both the operations which I had missed, and had had abundant opportunities of examining the piercing the throat with the skewer, and the plunging the knife into the stomach; and he was utterly unable to explain how it was done without causing death, much less the effusion of blood, or to account for it by any trick or sleight-of-hand operation. In fact the danger, as my Moslem friend observed, of refusing beyond a certain point to trust the evidences of one's own senses, is that we believe in what are termed miracles, and occurrences far more wonderful, upon the evidence of the senses of persons probably more easily deceived than ourselves who lived ages ago. Thus, if in these days the curative power of saliva, the subduing of serpents, scorpions, and other "deadly things," the imperviousness to fire, and the healing of a sword-cut by a touch, are nothing more than a trick by which the most acute and intelligent observer may be deceived, the modern religious sceptic is fairly entitled to maintain that the same trick was known to fanatical religious impostors for the last two thousand years or more. It is evident, therefore, that there must be a limit to the scepticism of one's own senses and those of others, or one would be left without any ground for believing in anything.

Among other novelties which have been introduced into Damascus since the arrival there of Midhat Pasha as governor-general of Syria, is an Arab theatre upon semi-civilized principles. I went there one night with his Highness, and was surprised at the modern aspect of the house. There was a ticket-seller at a *guichet*, and a house neatly arranged with seats, which were well occupied by an

exclusively male audience. In the front row were the seats reserved for the governor-general's party; while the orchestra — consisting of a man who played an instrument like a guitar, another who played one like a zittern, another who played a native clarionet, another who sang, and another who drummed — were placed in a recess to the right of the stage. The curtain was inscribed with an Arabic motto, and rose and fell with irregular jerks; the scenes did not change; and the actors sang, or rather chanted, their parts. The play was the original story, which Verdi has adapted, and the plot of which he has considerably altered, of *Aïdè*. The leading actor, who performed the part of the general, was a man of considerable dramatic power, clad in a coat of mail with a most fantastic helmet, which at the opening scene partly concealed his face, and whose lower extremities were clothed in thick white hose. He stalked about the stage unceasingly in his stocking-soles, swaying his body in a measured and not ungraceful manner, so as to keep time with the cadence of his voice, which was expressive of his varied emotions and by no means unmusical. The Egyptian king's daughter who was in love with him, and the Abyssinian king's daughter, whom he makes a prisoner in war, and with whom he falls in love, thus nearly breaking the other one's heart, were both boys dressed as girls, who acted their parts with great feeling and cleverness, considering their youth. Indeed it was difficult to tell that they were not girls. They were picturesquely attired in Oriental costumes, the one as a slave, the other as a king's daughter; but the other female attendants wore semi-Europeanized dresses which were by no means becoming. The king of Egypt was a splendidly arrayed monarch, after the style of the conventional Sardanapalus; and he did the Eastern potentate to perfection. Indeed the whole performance was far more skilfully executed than might have been expected, though of acting in the strict sense of the word there was none: it was recitation, now plaintive, now impassioned, and, in the case of one character, jocose; but the perpetual motion of the players, who move rhythmically about the stage all the time, grows somewhat monotonous to the foreigner accustomed to more lively action. The audience, however, seemed thoroughly to enter into the spirit of the piece, and appreciated the jokes keenly. During the *entr'actes* the

Arab band played the wild, discordant music with which all Eastern travellers are familiar, and which is to be heard any day in the *cafés* and gardens of the city. The ballet was of the tamest description, and consisted of the most wearisome repetition of little steps. It was in every respect strictly proper, and was danced by the youths who represented the princess's ladies. The whole affair was an experiment which seems likely to succeed, and on the whole, was a pleasing if slightly dull performance.

There lies to the north-east of Damascus, and a little to the right of the road which leads from that city to Aleppo, a town rarely visited by the foreigner, and which possesses a special interest as being the only place left in the country where the old Syriac or Aramaic language is still spoken. It was known to the ancients as Magluda, and is called in these days Malula. Finding it could be reached in one day from Baalbec, by a road which was not generally known, I was glad to accept the invitation of our vice-consul, Mr. Jago, to make the trip with him. We took the usual route to Baalbec, by way of the picturesque spring of Ain Fijeh, sleeping the first night at the lofty village of Bludan, which has been used by Damascus consuls as a retreat from the heat of the city, ever since Sir Richard Wood first made it a sanitarium. The peculiar characteristic and principal charm of the scenery which immediately surrounds Damascus consists in the vivid contrasts which it presents. At one moment one is riding over an arid desert, where the eye is wearied with the monotony of desolation, where the rocks scorch and sand blinds, and the sun glares fiercely down upon the panting wayfarer; and just when it has grown almost intolerable you reach the precipitous edge of the Sahara, and plunge in a few moments into a perfect bath of the brightest green, where clear waters are plashing, birds are singing, leaves are rustling, and the most delightful shade woos you to its cool recesses. The trees are brilliant with fruit-blossoms, and the whole atmosphere is fragrant with their delicious perfume. What wonder if you linger amid these tempting groves of apricots, peaches, figs, almonds, pomegranates, mulberries, walnuts, and tall poplars? The ground is too valuable to be allowed to produce a useless tree; those which are not fruit-bearing are almost exclusively poplars, used for building-purposes. Even the villages are placed on the edge of the

desert, so that people may not waste the ground which it is possible to irrigate by living on it. Little runnels of water trickle in every direction in these cool, seductive shades, which, however, like other attractions to the senses, are not altogether without their danger, for the sudden change from the heats of the desert to such enchanting but damp spots, is likely to produce a chill and its attendant fever, — a fact which it is difficult to realize as one plunges into the crystal fountain where it wells in a full torrent from its source — as at Ain Fijeh — as cold as ice, and foams away to give life and sustenance to the thousands who live upon the abundance produced by the lands which it waters. For the time, at all events, invigorated and refreshed, we scorn all sanitary considerations, and brace ourselves once more to meet the fatigue and the drowsiness which the desert sun produces after our relaxation. And so we jog wearily on to our night quarters, which invite us to a repose more grateful, if possible, than the last. Bludan is situated at an elevation of five thousand feet above the sea, so our night was most refreshingly cool.

On the following day we descended into the burning plain of the Buka'a, and were not sorry to see at last the tall trees and abundant vegetation which surrounds the grandest monument existing of a departed civilization. The modern tourist, probably animated by a sentiment of spite at the consciousness of being such a pigmy as compared with the giants of art in those days, has taken to practising with a revolver at that more delicate tracery which is so far above his reach that he cannot destroy it with a hammer. Why he should of late have become consumed with a passion for putting fragments of Baalbec upon his mantelpiece when he gets home, it is difficult to conceive; for the mind of the Cook's tourist in these matters is unfathomable; but certain it is, that within the last three years there has been such wholesale destruction with pistols going on, that most of those exquisite medallions, which a few years ago formed the chief glory of Baalbec, are completely effaced. The capitals of the Corinthian columns seem to make good targets for practice of this sort. You can aim at a particular fluted leaf, and have the pleasure of chipping the others all round until you bring down with a crash the particular piece of moulding you want. Then carved cornices are nice things to blaze away at, and the nose

of an empress on a medallion forty feet above your head requires good shooting. I made inquiries on the spot as to the kind of people who were the best shots, and was informed that the American tourist carried all before him. This, however, I cannot speak of from personal knowledge; but I think the old practice of decorating the magnificent remains of a civilization so superior to ours with one's name, was a more touching way of paying homage to them than battering them to pieces with firearms and carrying off fragments as the evidence of one's æsthetic tastes. It is needless to suggest that it would be very easy to get a piece of stone anywhere and label it "Baalbec;" and I venture to recommend that fragments from a neighboring quarry should be carved and kept for this purpose, and sold to the tourist. It would be an additional source of revenue to the Turkish government at a moment when its finances are sorely in need of assistance. On my return to Damascus I called the attention of the vali to the destruction of Baalbec by the appliances of modern civilization, at the hands of the race which has taken the reform of the Turkish empire so much to heart, and suggested that these "Baalbec atrocities" might be put an end to if a fee was charged, and a guard put over the ruins. If the Christian tourist was first made to pay, and then watched, the "unspeakable Turk" might possibly keep him in some sort of order.

The modern town of Baalbec is a more than usually flourishing place. The Christians are getting all the land into their hands, and are gradually ousting the Moslems, who having no European powers to protect them, are generally throughout Turkey the most hardly used class of the population. In the immediate neighborhood of Damascus, it is true, the case is reversed; but away from the seat of government the Mohammedan peasantry are decidedly, as a rule, less well off, and have more burdens to bear and oppression to endure than their Christian neighbors, in whose favor humanitarian sympathy has been so largely and so ignorantly enlisted. As, however, the popular demagogue, who expounds on this subject to the ordinary British voter from a platform, seems to understand it so much better than people who have lived and travelled in the country, it would be presumptuous in me to allude to it at any greater length.

About a mile and a half from Baalbec

there is a beautiful and abundant spring, which is enclosed in a large basin, and is called Ras el Ain. It was the last inhabited spot we were to see for some hours, and with a heavy heart I turned my back upon the majestic ruin, whose most attractive features cannot long survive the attacks that are being made upon them. Our way led up a wild desolate wady, which reminded me of the pass of Glencoe. We were travelling almost due east, and were breasting the western slopes of the Anti-Lebanon, which we were to cross by a pass at an elevation of about seven thousand feet above the level of the sea. Our day's march promised to be a long and fatiguing one, so we had started early, and pushed forward after our nimble guide with as much expedition as the stony track which did duty for a road would allow. After a scramble of an hour and a half we reached the Neby Kokab, where there was a stream which repeatedly lost itself and reappeared as it dashed down a gully, coloring the stones with its strong mineral properties, and where, in a wild spot, there was the tomb of a departed saint covered with relics. The steep hillsides here were not altogether barren, and in places the scenery was picturesque and even grand. Arbor vitæ grew abundantly, intermingled with a few oaks; while in the crevices of the rocks grew small, flowering, thorny shrubs and forget-me-nots, and the Syrian speedwell blended its blue tints with bright pink and purple flowers, whose name was unknown to me.

When at last we reached the summit, it was not to find ourselves on the crest of the ridge with a panoramic view beyond, as we expected, but on the edge of a rocky plateau, covered with broad patches of snow. We had frequently to dismount in order to cross these, as the crust was scarcely strong enough to bear our horses without the riders, and in places the drifts were deep. The path was merely nominal, and practically we found our own way between or across them, coming occasionally upon patches of green, the result of temporary pools and streams formed by the melting snow, and furnishing pasture to occasional flocks of sheep, tended by wild-looking shepherds, who bivouacked in these cold regions in the summer, and who stared at us in amazement, as specimens of an unknown race. We only came across two or three of these herdsmen, and, with that exception, there were no signs of human life. The country was wild,

craggy, and desolate in the extreme, but it had the immense merit of being cool; and we quite regretted finding ourselves, after an hour and a half of this description of travel, gradually descending on the other side over arid wastes, till we reached, in six hours from Baalbec, the squalid Metawali village of Zibdy, perched in a barren amphitheatre of rocks, perforated with caves, and of most uninviting appearance. The peculiar Mohammedan sect which inhabit it were notorious for their lawless character and thieving propensities, and we were not tempted to investigate it closely, as they looked ragged and scowling, but pushed on over the parched table-land beyond, under a blazing sun. There seemed no limit to the waste of desert upon which we had now entered, till suddenly, by one of those freaks of natural conformation which characterizes the country, we came unexpectedly upon a ravine through which flowed a small stream, fringed by a margin of green corn-fields. It was a cleft in the Sahara; and when we had dived down into it, watered our thirsty steeds, and scrambled up on the other side, we could look back to the mountain-range beyond and see no sign of verdure or cultivation. Towering behind us, and a little to the right of the pass by which we had traversed the Anti-Lebanon, were the peaks of Nabi Baruh and Tala-at-Musa, rising to a height of seventy-nine hundred and eighty-seven hundred feet respectively; while away to the north, and just peeping from behind the shoulder of the low sand-range upon which we stood, we could see the trees and orchards of the village of Yabrud faintly visible in the afternoon haze.

Yabrud is the Jabruda of Ptolemy, and a Bishop of Yabrud is mentioned as having been present at the Council of Nicæa. There is a Greek church here of great antiquity, which is said to have been built by the empress Helena; and near the town is the ruined castle of Kasr Berdawil, a colonnade of which is half preserved. I was sorry to be unable to visit these interesting and little-known remains, but they do not lie far off one of the roads leading from Damascus to Aleppo, by which they are the most accessible. We crossed this road before reaching Malula, and from it looked down upon a rocky sandstone ridge, which had been cleft as if by a knife. Our guide pointed to it and said "Malula;"<sup>5</sup> but beyond the walls of a monastery at the entrance to the gorge, we

could see no sign of human habitation. The rugged conformation of the sides of the ruptured rock as seen from this point was strikingly picturesque. We descended towards the monastery, but turned sharply to the right just before reaching it, and found ourselves on the brink of a yawning gulf which opened at the base of the cliff. It seemed impossible to plunge into the chasm on horseback, so we dismounted and let our beasts find their own way. The well-worn steps in the rock proved that it had been a sort of staircase used by animals from time immemorial, and our sure-footed ponies did not hesitate to make the descent, while we scrambled down after them. We soon found ourselves in a sort of tunnel, the smooth rock rising to a height of one hundred and fifty or two hundred feet on each side, and closing in upon us to such an extent that we could only here and there see a strip of sky. The passage was so narrow that two loaded animals could not have passed; and side chasms and crevices opened up into the rock, which was full of caves, while gigantic masses had fallen and got jammed in the huge cracks. Altogether it was the strangest and most weird entrance to the abode of man that I had ever seen; and my curiosity was excited to the highest pitch as we followed it for about a hundred yards, when we came to another flight of stone steps, up which we clambered, and then emerged upon a scene of singular quaintness and beauty. The town seemed hived upon the steep jagged sides of an amphitheatre of rocks; the houses were perched one above another, the flat roofs of those below forming the balconies and courts of those above, and sometimes the most easy mode of access from one to the other. We scrambled now up steep steps, now through tunnels partly of natural rock partly artificial, amid crags, caverns, and fissures, until we were told that we had arrived at the house of the sheikh, where a number of women were collected to receive us, and immediately began to bustle about and prepare a room for our reception.

We stabled our steeds in a cave, and went out to see the place before it was too dark, threading our way amid the labyrinthine alleys which wound up and down and in and out of the rocks and houses. Below us the gorge expanded into a richly cultivated, well-watered valley, where fruitful gardens supplied the town with their wealth of produce. We



crossed the clear stream which gushed from the mountain-side amid the most luxuriant verdure and under overhanging foliage, and looking back could gain a better idea of the singular conformation by which we were surrounded. We found that a fissure in the range, corresponding to the one by which we had dived into the town, cleft the rocks further to the north, thus making a craggy, precipitous shoulder between the two, where the rocks and houses mingled in grotesque confusion. There was a sort of tunnel entrance by this chasm, similar to the one by which we had entered, and at its cavernous mouth was perched the orthodox Greek monastery of Mar Thekla. The one on the top of the rock at the point we had descended was the Greek Catholic monastery of Mar Serkis. The monks are celebrated for the excellent wine which they manufacture. All round were ancient rock-tombs, and the caves which in old time were occupied by hermits. In the days of Sir John Mandeville, who, as far as I know, is the only traveller who has ever described Malula, he found it a nest of hermits, who have long since died out; but from time immemorial it has been esteemed a place of great sanctity, and the monasteries to this day are much resorted to on certain religious festivals by pilgrims from all parts of Syria, and have in consequence become immensely wealthy. There are only two Moslem families in the town, which is otherwise exclusively Christian, of the orthodox or Greek Catholic persuasion. It is a curious thing that the women of these two Moslem families do not cover their faces, thus falling into the custom of the majority. The converse of this is to be seen in all Moslem towns where there are only a few Christian families, and where the Christian women adopt the Moslem custom of veiling themselves rather than appear singular in their dress. Malula contains nearly two thousand inhabitants, and the whole population, together with that of the two small neighboring villages of Bakha and Jubadin, speak the ancient Syriac.

I listened with great interest to the musical sounds of this almost extinct tongue. It is probably very nearly identical with that spoken as the colloquial language of Palestine in the time of our Lord. It was the language in which he taught, and therefore possesses associations of a character to which no other tongue can lay claim. When we returned to our eyrie for the night, the women

were gabbling in it with great volubility. They told us that most of the inhabitants could speak Arabic, but that they always used Syriac in their familiar intercourse, though it was not taught in the school. It is to be feared, therefore, that in a few years it will have taken its place in the list of dead languages. The sheikh himself was absent, but the door of the women's apartments opened upon the roof, which formed our dining-room, and exhibited a curious domestic scene, the children lying asleep, innocent of attire — and the females, whose relationship to the sheikh I could not exactly discover, pursuing their maternal and other avocations, entirely regardless of our presence. We lingered long on this interesting housetop, for the light of a brilliant moon shed its soft lustre over the wild scene, and the ghostly shadows of projecting crags and pinnacles melted into the gloom of the cracks and caverns. At last the glimmering of lamps and the sound of voices gradually died away into a sort of fantastic stillness, until we almost expected to see phantoms emerge, and a life in keeping with the weird surroundings take the place of that which had gone to rest.

Our way next morning led down the cultivated valley for a short distance, and then turned to the right through groves of pistachio-trees, the cultivation of the nut being one of the principal industries of the place. The hillsides were also covered with vine and shumach trees. From the latter is made the yellow dye with which the leather of slippers or *papooshes* is colored. For three hours we rode over a dreary but partially cultivated plain, keeping along the base of a low, serrated range of sandstone, while, to the left, the burning plain stretched away to the Jebel Abul Ata, from the southern slopes of which I had already looked across the desert which extends to the Euphrates. The convent of Sednaya, perched on a crag, which is surrounded by the village of the same name, was a welcome sight, for it was to be our mid-day halt; and leaving our ponies at the foot of the long flight of stone steps that lead up the side of the rock to the convent, we obtained admittance from the nuns, and were shown by the lady superior into the apartment provided for the reception of guests. It was a delightful, airy room, commanding an extensive view in all directions; and from an adjoining roof we were indiscreet enough to try and peep into the nuns' quarters, which formed

one side of a long, narrow courtyard. With the exception of two or three elderly females, our curiosity was not gratified — the young ones, if there were any, remaining in seclusion. The old lady who did the honors, and gave us some excellent wine and other comestibles, informed us that the convent contained forty nuns; that it was fifteen hundred years old; and that, at certain times of the year, it was one of the most frequented resorts for pilgrims in Syria. This is due to the virtues of a miracle-working Madonna, whose picture is in the church, and who possesses the special faculty of increasing the population in cases where a wife incurs the disgrace of having no offspring, or only daughters. Hence female devotees, desirous of making their lords happy, flock hither in great numbers, and, according to popular account, with great success, and the convent profits pecuniarily in consequence.

Traffic of this peculiar description is not confined in Syria to religious establishments, but the exploitation of feminine credulity is successfully carried on by individual miracle-mongers, who are supposed to possess the art of dealing with this mysterious problem of nature. A celebrated professor of it not long since accumulated a large fortune and acquired a great reputation by a very simple trick. Upon being applied to for assistance, he invariably prophesied the wished-for result, at the same time writing, in an obscure corner of the house, a prediction to the effect that the coming event would not be a son, but a daughter. If it turned out a son he said nothing of the written prediction, and passed for a great seer; if, on the other hand, a daughter arrived, he explained that he was well aware that such would be the case, but not wishing to hurt the feelings of the parents by an unnecessarily premature disappointment, he had contented himself with writing it secretly, — and now triumphantly revealed the written prophecy. In a Greek convent which I once visited in Moldavia, the comparative seclusion practised by the nuns of Sednaya did not exist; and I have no doubt that, had we been able to prolong our visit, their coyness here would have worn off. We were obliged, however, to content ourselves with an hour's rest, during which we entirely exhausted the lady superior's conversational resources.

On the east side of the rock on which the monastery is situated are some ancient rock-cut tombs, and further down on the

slope is a square tower, evidently very ancient, probably Roman, and perhaps a tomb; it is known as Mar Butrus er Rasûl, or the Apostle Peter, and stands on a basement of three steps. It is thirty feet square and twenty-six feet high. Each wall consists of ten courses of finely-hewn stone. On the south side is a small aperture surrounded by a moulding, and closed with an iron door, which was locked. After some trouble we found the guardian, who let us in; but except a few poor modern pictures and some goods which had been put into it, apparently as a warehouse, it was empty. The roof was vaulted. As we passed through the somewhat squalid village we saw a wedding party. The bride was a pretty girl, dressed in a very becoming jacket, trimmed with gold embroidery; her forehead and neck were hung with coins and jewellery, and her skirt was of bright scarlet. Her attendant maidens were similarly decorated and attired, and they formed a bright and picturesque group.

After an hour and a half of hot ride across the Sahara we suddenly dived into the refreshing pool of green verdure, on the edge of which is situated the village of Menin. A copious fountain of crystal water welled from the base of the cliff, with volume enough to be applied to mill purposes at its source, and to be subdivided into innumerable streamlets for irrigation. Under the shade of a grove of tall poplars all the women of the village were assembled, each with a spinning-wheel, chatting in picturesque groups by the side of the gurgling stream, and very much interfering with our bathing operations — for it was impossible after our hot ride to resist a plunge into this delightful fountain. In the cliffs overhead were numerous rock-tombs and chambers; while the remains of what was probably once a temple, proved that from ancient times the attractions of the "source" of Menin had been appreciated. The valley widened as we rode down it. The temperature had sensibly changed for the better. In places the road passed between damp banks on which grew creepers, ferns, and mosses, while walnut and fruit trees lent a most grateful shade. We could scarcely realize the fact that half an hour before we had been on a desert without a patch of green visible, so potent is the magic touch of water. We luxuriated in these delightful shades for a couple of hours, and then once more the scene changed and we entered a savage gorge, along the rocky side of which the

water was carried in an aqueduct. It is so narrow that we had to ride along the natural bed of the brook which carried off in winter the superfluous water. This romantic chasm, devoid of all vegetation, separates the range of Jebel Kasium from that of Jebel Kalamûn, and at its outlet we reach Berzeh. A Moslem legend makes this the birthplace of Abraham; while, according to another tradition, it is the point to which he penetrated when he pursued the captors of his brother Lot "unto Hobah which is on the left of Damascus," and succeeded in rescuing him. It does not seem to me in the least to answer the description; but the whole neighborhood of Damascus is so replete with Biblical association, that the uncertainty in regard to detail can never deprive it of the peculiar interest which every salient feature must possess. As the evening shadows were lengthening we found ourselves once more on the verge of that vast expanse of green, in the centre of which the domes and minarets of the brilliant city were glittering in the setting sun; and spurring our willing steeds over the well-worn roads which converge to it as a common centre, we regained, in another hour, its comparative civilization.

From The Spectator.

#### A GOSSIP ABOUT GOETHE, IN HIS BIRTH-PLACE.

THE hundred and thirtieth anniversary of Goethe's birthday was kept, as usual, on August 28th of this year. The inhabitants and visitors in Frankfort are still enthusiastic in their demonstrations. The girls and young men bring bouquets and crowns of flowers, with which they smother the birth-room; and those who have portraits of Goethe, or of any one connected with his life, send them to be exhibited in the shrine whereto the worshippers flock on the birthday. This shrine is a solid, substantial, and, considering the times in which it was built, spacious, citizen's house. It is now nearly empty of furniture, and is used for no other purpose than as a show, except one or two rooms inhabited by the showman. You enter through a turn-stile in the hall, and pay a mark for the sight. The only part which is artistically attractive is the balustrade of the staircase up to the second landing. This is of beautifully wrought iron, made at the time Goethe's father took the house; and the centre of

each design is a monogram of his two parents' names. On the landings are several casts from busts of Goethe's more celebrated friends, and the rooms are hung with pictures and portraits. These last, and a few relics of his lady-loves, form the chief interest of the show. There were many portraits of Goethe lent for this year's birthday. Two were original oil paintings, the others engravings and photographs from pictures in different parts of the world. Young Goethe, painted in profile, small-sized, holding out at arm's length a silhouette portrait of a young lady, "*wahrscheinlich Carlotta*," as you are told by the showman of the house, is more characteristic as a specimen of the faults of German art than suggestive of the appearance of a master-poet. The sentimental enthusiasm shining out of the gaze of the neatly-dressed young man towards the prosaic little black profile would imply a joke to most minds, but the German who painted it was evidently quite in earnest, sentimentally in earnest, with this treatment of his subject. He has accentuated all the points which in theory are considered as belonging to beauty, fulfilling the old-fashioned notion of "regular features." The nose he has lengthened and made enormous, the eye large and starting, the eye-lashes very hard and long. Nothing suggestive of Goethe's mind can be gathered from it. It is but the framework of a face, showing none of the subtle workings of the mind upon the features or the lines, only a superadded sentimentalism towards the black silhouette. The other portrait in oils is life-sized, and has not even the merit of being funny. The engravings and photographs of the well-known portraits, especially the photograph of the picture in St. Petersburg, are interesting and suggestive, but all are more or less prosaic. We pass on to his parents' portraits, which are both of them characteristic of what we know of their characters. Much likeness to Goethe is to be traced in the mother's countenance. To her he owed the larger sides of his nature and mind, and the elasticity, the lovingness, and the loveliness of his temperament; to his father he owed the *methodisch* love of order and self-government. There is a twinkle in Frau Goethe's eye, denoting an appreciation of fun; and in the whole face there is fine, large modelling and a cheerful expression, happy in a sense of power; and also there are the indications of a nature wide in its sympathies and genial in its warmth. Herr

Goethe's portrait is that of a prim person, rather anxious, with, perhaps, more desire for power than ability to obtain it. After the parents' portraits, we are shown the relics of Goethe's romances. A little silk jacket, with bunches of lavender-flowers stamped on it, and pinked frills round the edge, stands for poor little Fredericka. She was too insignificant a person to have left a portrait behind her, in the days before photography. Of Carlotta, immortalized by being the heroine of "Werther," we have the engraving from a portrait, and a fanciful picture of the scene when Goethe first saw her, cutting bread-and-butter for the children before going to the dance. However much the sentiment of this may denote Carlotta's virtue in having performed her duty before taking her pleasure, there is a wild revelry about the scene in this print which shows in the artist a want of the sense of order and decorum proper to such occasions which we hope the perfect Carlotta did not share. Her real portrait, however, is interesting. It is taken full-face, with the hair turned up over cushions. The eyes are sleepy, and rather Japanese in shape; the upper lip rather long, but delicately cut; and the whole face is sweet and refined in expression, but not heroic. Of "Lili" there is a portrait profile, which looks as if it might have been like. It is a pretty mignonnette head, on a long, slender throat. There is a little pertness perhaps in the *nez retroussé* and the pose of the head, but it is bird-like and delicate, and, like Carlotta, refined, though not heroic. Both these and also Fredericka, from the description we hear of her must have been *scharmante mädchen*. Of the Frau von Stein, unfortunately, no real portrait was exhibited, only an engraving from a picture of the theatricals at the court of Weimar in which Goethe acted, and where Frau von Stein is represented holding out, with a gushing enthusiasm, a wreath of laurels towards him. Both are palpably conventional portraits. Schiller says, writing to his friend Körner about the Frau von Stein: "Beautiful she can never have been, but her countenance has a soft earnestness, and a quite peculiar openness." Schiller may have taken a somewhat solemn view of the necessary requisitions for beauty, but it is evident from all the descriptions and from her portrait that the Frau von Stein possessed no beauty which, in itself, was overpowering; that she, together with Fredericka, Lili, and Carlotta, possessed a charm which fasci-

nated Goethe independently of regularity of feature. Unfortunately, there was no picture of Christiana, nor of the later loves, and, other visitors arriving, we were left at peace and required to look at nothing more, but to wander about the rooms and let them impress us with thoughts of Goethe.

Surrounded by the walls of the house where he was born, and where he lived before he was a great intellectual power, surrounded by these portraits of himself and those who specially cared for him and whom he thought he cared for, by the evidences of the enthusiasm he still creates in the minds of his countrymen and women, and haunted by that interesting book, "Goethe's Life," written by our own countryman, who, since the last Goethe birthday, has passed away, we feel more vividly the impression of what Goethe was as a man than what he was as an author. A German near us exclaims enthusiastically, "*Wie ein Apollo!*" as he looks at Goethe's portrait, and we smile,—we do not quite know why, but feel there is something comical in the comparison. An Apollo with a double chin, and with strong materialistic indications about the lines of the mouth!

A very German Apollo in fact, was Goethe, very handsome, doubtless, but an Apollo whose sentiments were governed by his reason, and what he considered was due to his self-culture and development; whose romances were more or less play, to be begun and ended according as he willed them to begin or end, but whose lasting liaison, ending in marriage, sprang from feelings of the earth, earthy; an Apollo who could so little understand the vagaries of a jealous woman, the vagaries of a temperament that was not entirely governed by reason, that when Frau von Stein would not behave herself amiably when she felt herself replaced in his warmest affections by Christiana, he writes quite solemnly, and with no idea of insulting her, that he fears she has gone back to the bad habit of drinking too much coffee, which she had left off from love of him. Is it possible that a man should be so great a poet and have so little sense of humor, so little imagination of one kind? We feel it was possible, and only possible, because Goethe was a German, and of all Germans, the most typically German. We are constantly hearing and saying that Germans are *so* sentimental. Their sentimentality is obvious, at times obtrusive, but it is, nevertheless, we think, quite outside the strongest side

of their nature. Perhaps it is because they are really thorough-going materialists that their ideal is to be romantic. On the same principle that we see those who lead the hardest intellectual lives turning to the simplest games for recreation, so the most reasonable, the most exact minds, will enjoy the most romantic games of sentiment as play. As we look at the relics of Goethe's games in this line, at the little silk jacket preserved under the glass case, because the heart over which it was worn beat so warmly for one who, though he excited the warmth, could leave her when, as he himself says, it almost cost her her life, — when we think of this fresh, budding life that was spoilt by the "greatest intellectual power of our age," we cannot help rather despising, and certainly hating, the self-culture and pomposities which were so baneful to her interests. Particularly are we provoked when we read how comfortable Goethe felt about it after revisiting her, and realizing how he had spoiled her life. He describes his visit and his contentment in a letter to the same lady to whom he afterwards attributes an excess in coffee-drinking as the explanation of her annoyance at the game with her being over. He says: "On the 25th I rode towards Sesenheim, and there found the family as I had left it eight years ago. I was welcomed in the most friendly manner. The second daughter loved me in those days better than I deserved, and more than others to whom I had given so much passion and faith. I was forced to leave her, *at a moment when it nearly cost her her life*; she passed lightly over that episode, to tell me what traces still remained of the old illness, and behaved with such exquisite delicacy and generosity from the moment that I stood before her unexpected on the threshold, that I felt quite relieved. I must do her the justice to say that she made not the slightest attempt to rekindle in my bosom the embers of love. . . . I stayed the night there, and departed at dawn, leaving behind me friendly faces; so that I can now think once more of this corner of the world with comfort, and know that they are at peace with me." "Lili" we have naturally less compassion for. Besides being a coquette, she was a smarter, more prosperous, young lady. Moreover, she married, and the closing scene with Goethe was over her baby, as he describes in another letter to Frau von Stein: "In the afternoon I called on Lili, and found the lovely *Grasaffen* with a baby of seven

weeks old, her mother standing by. There also I was received with admiration and pleasure. I made many inquiries, and to my great delight found the good creature happily married. Her husband, from what I could learn, seems a worthy, sensible fellow, rich, well-placed in the world; in short, she has everything she needs. Supped with Lili, and went away in the moonlight. The sweet emotions which accompanied me I cannot describe." The story of "Lili," whom, in his autobiography, he says he loved more than any other woman — "she was the first, and I can also add she is the last, I truly loved" — shows more than any other what *he* meant by loving. The moment the obstacles preventing his marriage with Lili were removed, from that moment he dreaded it! Why? Because he was perfectly true and real, he had far too great a mind to stand being bored by pretences, and knowing where the reality of his feelings stopped, he would not involve his life by any action which would have entailed an unwise strain upon his affections, which strain would have led to unhappiness to others, as well as to himself. He was right so far, and he was wise, but in this side of his nature he was small. Charming girls made vivid impressions on his very impressionable nature, but he always knew that his heart of hearts, the part of human nature which makes action imperative, was free. He was more in love with the feeling of being in love than with the objects that inspired the feeling. Possibly, according to his lights, he was not selfish, though his love-episodes lead so much to this conclusion. At all events, his apparent selfishness in action was not an end in itself, — it was the means towards an end he conscientiously thought desirable for others, as well as for himself. He was comfort-loving for others, as well as for himself. In one period of his life, we find him trying daily to spend less upon himself, that he may have more to give to others. Early in life we find him enjoying Spinoza with supreme satisfaction, and saying, "But what especially riveted me to him, was the boundless disinterestedness which shone forth in every sentence. That wonderful sentiment, 'He who truly loves God must not require God to love him in return,' filled my mind. To be disinterested in everything, but most of all in *love and friendship*, was my highest desire, my maxim, my practice, so that that saucy speech of Philena's, 'If I love thee, what is that to thee?' was spoken right out of my heart."



We find him in later years generously grateful, disinterested, and gently tolerant in his conduct towards Christiana. These cannot have been the feelings nor the actions of a mere egotist. As an artist, the picture of his life is a brilliant picture. There is a sustained power, an elasticity, an ever-spontaneous growth to the end, which made him virtually a younger man at eighty than most men are at forty, but there is a want in the picture, — the want there is in the picture of the German nation. Nature seems to have said to Goethe, "I have given you so much, and such a faculty for self-development and self-government; you must now manage yourself. I cannot, in fairness to the rest of the world, help you any more."

And nature did not give him the faculty of worshipping any man or woman, or anything outside himself with his whole strength; and without this faculty of worshipping, lives must always be incomplete, must always miss the highest greatness. Goethe's mind was a grand, first-rate machine; the powers that put it into motion proceeded from the heart and brain, but very little soul went to the propelling of it. His own intellectual light was his hero, and what of clenching completeness is wanting in his actions and feelings, was caused, we think, by the want of a light recognized as above himself towards which his soul could yearn. There were no ghosts about his life; there are no ghosts about the lives of the many Germans he has educated, and who are almost too reasonable to need a religion. And Goethe was too reasonable really to love. Mr. Lewes says: "He knew little of the exquisite *companionship* of two souls striving in emulous spirit of loving rivalry to become better, to become wiser, teaching each other to soar. He knew little of this; and the kiss he feared to press upon the loving lips of Frederica — the life of sympathy he refused to share with her — are wanting to the greatness of his works," and we may add, to the greatness of his life.

But we cannot leave his old home with his shortcomings uppermost. Though his nature was incomplete on one side, it was never capable of anything small, ignoble, or petty. When he "loved and rode away," he was as kind and considerate, barring the riding away, as when he was delighting in the presence of those who fascinated him. This kindness, it is true, may have been enhanced by the gratitude he felt towards those who had afforded him *situations* for his poems and

dramas, as an artist will feel grateful to the beauty that has given him the inspiration for his picture. Still, gratitude is always something. We must conclude by a sentence from Mr. Lewes, which has in it the characteristics of this kind of thoughtfulness, and also of the materialism of the German Apollo: "The heart of the Frau von Stein had no memory but for its wounds. She spoke with petty malice of the "low person" who had usurped her place, rejected Goethe's friendship, affected to pity him, and circulated gossip about his beloved. They were forced to meet, but they met no longer as before. To the last, he thought and spoke of her tenderly, and I know, on unexceptionable authority, that *when there was anything appetizing brought to table, which he thought would please her, he often said, 'Send some of this to the Frau von Stein.'*"

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From The Saturday Review.  
THE CARTER AND TALBOT CORRESPONDENCE.

IN the year 1809 the Rev. Montagu Pennington, the nephew of Miss Carter, "the learned" Mrs. Carter, or Mrs. Epictetus Carter as she was commonly called in her later life, published a long series of letters that had passed between his aunt and "the celebrated" Miss Talbot. In the early part of last century ladies became famous with far greater ease than they could now. Miss Carter was no doubt a good Greek scholar; but Miss Talbot's claims to celebrity would scarcely be admitted at the present day. Her biographer, however, records with a great flourish that she learned astronomy and geography, and probably understood them both well. She was, he adds, a mistress of French and Italian, and had some knowledge of Latin — very little, we may remark. Moreover, she was, he says, descended from an ancient and noble family, and was brought up in the house of an eminent and rising prelate. "Hence," he writes, "even in Kent, when she was not more than twenty years of age, she was spoken of by the appellation of 'the celebrated Miss Talbot.'" The Dean of Canterbury, even in this time of her youth, never mentioned her but with the justest admiration; while two young ladies, whose fine accomplishments, we read, would give them the quickest sense of such a happiness as they pursued, en-

vied Mrs. Carter the advantage of Miss Talbot's friendship, after which they had toiled in vain. However, if she scarcely at any time deserved to be called celebrated, and if she has long been forgotten, nevertheless it is easy to see by her letters that both the dean and the young ladies had some grounds for their admiration. There is much in the correspondence that may still be read with pleasure; nor can we assign any great superiority to the more learned of the two ladies. There are few, however, who will take the trouble to go through these volumes, for the editor, unfortunately, did not exercise any discretion. He published the letters just as they were written, without taking the trouble to make a selection of those that were most interesting.

As might be expected in the case of two such learned women, no small part of their correspondence is on the subject of literature. "I want much to know," wrote Miss Talbot, a few months after the publication of Fielding's first novel—"I want much to know whether you have yet condescended to read 'Joseph Andrews.'" It seems to have been a question in the young lady's mind whether a woman who could read Greek would be able to bring herself down to the level of an English novelist. Miss Carter replied, "I must thank you for the perfectly agreeable entertainment I have met in reading 'Joseph Andrews.' It contains such a surprising variety of nature, wit, morality, and good sense, as is scarcely to be met with in any one composition, and there is such a spirit of benevolence runs through the whole, as, I think, renders it peculiarly charming." "Joseph Andrews," we believe, is not thought proper reading for a young lady of the present day. Perhaps Miss Carter was in the wrong. Yet we will venture to say that could many of the most popular novels of our time, novels written by women and openly read by women, have been shown to her, she would have rejected them with indignation, contempt, and disgust. Miss Talbot a year later, writing from the palace of the Bishop of Oxford at Cuddesden, informs her friend that they were reading aloud all Sir Richard Steele's papers, taking a paper every day after breakfast, and another after supper. Some years later the Bishop of Gloucester came to stay with them—Pope's bishop, of whom the poet wrote:—

Manners and candor are to Benson given.

The good man read "Amelia" as he sat

nursing his cold by the fireside, and commented much upon it to Miss Talbot's edification. "He quarrelled excessively at the two first volumes." Miss Carter wrote in reply that "in favor of the bishop's cold his reading 'Amelia' in silence may be tolerated, but I am somewhat scandalized that, since he did not read it to you, you did not read it yourself. Methinks I long to engage you on the side of this poor, unfortunate book, which I am told the fine folks are unanimous in pronouncing to be very sad stuff." She can find a good word even for "Tom Jones." "The more I read 'Tom Jones,'" Miss Talbot had written to her, "the more I detest him, and admire Clarissa Harlowe—yet there are in it things that must touch and please every good heart, and probe to the quick many a bad one, and humor that it is impossible not to laugh at." "I am sorry," replies Miss Carter, "to find you so outrageous about poor Tom Jones; he is, no doubt, an imperfect, but not a detestable character, with all that honesty, good nature, and generosity of character." Miss Talbot, in a later letter, says that she had once heard a lady piously say to her son that she wished with all her heart he was like Tom Jones.

Four years after the publication of "Joseph Andrews" Miss Carter asks, "Have people utterly left off writing books? I have not heard of a new one this century, excepting one on the wonders of tar-water." Bishop Berkeley's treatise had just appeared. It is curious to notice the answer that was to be given to her question in the next few years. It was in the year 1746 that she had thus written. In 1747 "Clarissa" was read aloud at the bishop's palace. "As for us," wrote Miss Talbot, "we lived quite happy the whole time we were reading it, and we made that time as long as we could too, for we only read it *en famille*, at set hours, and all the rest of the day we talked of it. One can scarcely persuade oneself that they are not real characters and living people." "Poor Clarissa," wrote Miss Carter, "to complete the sum of her misfortunes, has been carried to Lisbon, as is reported by a person lately arrived from Portugal, and put into the Inquisition." Two months after "Clarissa" was being read, the bishop's niece asks her learned friend whether she has seen that strange book "Roderick Random." It certainly strikes us as a strange book for a young lady's reading; but Miss Talbot shows that she had learned from it

one striking lesson. "It is a very strange and a very low book," she writes, "though not without some characters in it, and, I believe, some very just, though very wretched, descriptions. Among others, there is the history of a poor tragedy author, ill-used by actors and managers, that, I think, one cannot but be touched with, when one considers how many such kinds of scenes there are every day in real life. That wicked good-nature of the rich and great that can see and acknowledge merit in distress, speak it fair, promise high, raise expectations, and yet continue indolent, and do nothing to relieve it, is shown in a striking manner; so is the cruelty of delaying people, and putting them off from day to day, and many other inhumanities unfelt by the doers, but not less blamable." But to return to the scarcity of books of which Miss Carter complained. In little more than a year after she had written there had been published, as we have shown, "Clarissa" and "Roderick Random." In another eighteen months both the ladies are reading "Tom Jones." The following year the first number of the "Rambler" appeared, and the two friends are discussing Johnson's merits. A few months later Miss Carter writes: "Have you seen 'Stanzas in a Country Churchyard,' and do not you greatly admire them?" Before the end of the year in which they first read Gray's "Elegy," they were reading "Amelia," and in the autumn of the following year they were deep in "Sir Charles Grandison." Within less than seven years after Miss Carter had asked whether people had utterly left off writing, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, and Gray had produced their masterpieces, while Johnson had written his "Rambler."

It is not only the literature of a past age that is brought before us in these letters, but the manners also. It is amusing to find that so much as a century and a quarter ago people looked back to a golden age of simplicity. Miss Carter had written to say that she had read nothing of late but "Joseph Andrews" and "Ariosto," as she had been greatly engaged in the important affair of working a pair of ruffles and a handkerchief. Her friend replies that so long as she does not injure her sight by her industry, she "highly applauds every such laudable imitation of the quiet domestic virtues of our great-grandmothers." The slowness of the stage-coach in those days is shown by the fact that Miss Carter raced one for a long distance. She had taken her

place at Deal for Canterbury, but hearing that a very fat man was to be taken up, had thought it best to go on foot part of the way. The coachman had seen her walking on in front. "He seemed to bear it tolerably well at first, but at the end of nine or ten miles he lost all patience, and using his utmost efforts to come up with me, scolded very heartily. Bless me, how the man did storm! He said, did I take his horses for negroes, that I used them like dogs, and it was a shame people should be treated so, for I had done them more harm than forty passengers, and he was obliged to drive like Old Scratch to come up with me."

Another time she travelled with "a very outrageous politician, who in his zeal for the Habeas Corpus Act talked so loud, and whisked such a quantity of dust into the coach, that we were," she says, "stunned and stifled. However, he was a mighty good-humored kind of man upon the whole, and took a lecture against swearing in very good part; and to do him justice, took several opportunities of praying as heartily as he swore." A curious account is given of the eclipse of the sun in July 1758. "One is stunned all day," she wrote from London, "with the bawling of lamentable prophecies, and a form of prayer. Some run away from London, and others, deeming it the safest place, come to it. The beggars in the streets actually insult folk who refuse to give them small beer, by clapping their hands, and threatening them that the day of judgment will be next Thursday. Others, as I find by a dialogue I overheard in a neighboring court, are of opinion that all the women in the world, only, are to die." From the *Gentleman's Magazine* we learn that Covent Garden Market was almost deserted by gardeners, who were afraid to come lest they should go home in the dark. An amusing description is also given of the alarm of a French invasion. The inhabitants of Deal, in which town Miss Carter lived, were frightened one winter night by a man thus proclaiming himself through the streets of the town: "I am John Redman of Walmer, comes to tell you the French are landed." The soldiers, seventy in number, were drawn out, and an alarm beat to call the townsmen to arms. An express was sent off to a man-of-war in the Downs for assistance. "Never was such a scene of uproar and confusion; women and children squeaking through the street, drums beating, bells ringing, signals flashing, and the guns from the

ships and Deal Castle firing. Various were the accounts that every passenger brought; that the French had taken Walmer Castle, knocked down the village, killed and eaten the inhabitants. Well, it was to be our turn next, and everybody was in expectation every minute of seeing the cannibals enter." In the morning it was found that two idle young fellows had got into Walmer Castle (which, to the honor of several officers who had standing salaries, was guarded by two old women), and making a strange noise with their sticks had frightened them. They ran into the village, declaring that the French had seized the castle. John Redman, in the hope of gaining to himself immortal glory, had done the rest. The alarm of a French invasion was not, however, unreasonable. They were a year later expected to land at Dungeness. "Admiral Vernon has several times attempted to sail there from the Downs," writes Mrs. Carter; "but the wind is directly against him, and fair for them." Had they succeeded in landing, there was absolutely no force to meet them. "The country," she writes, "is perfectly defenceless, not so much as the militia raised. The admiral had written to the governor of Deal Castle, or in his absence to the mayor of the town, with an account that the embarkation of the French was ready, and had advised the mayor to alarm the people and put them upon their guard. The mayor, being a peaceable, quiet man, took no great notice of the matter." Mrs. Carter's father, however, the minister of Deal chapel, saw the letter by chance, got a copy of it, and sent it to two of the deputy-lieutenants, who published it in the Canterbury newspapers, and called on the people to arm themselves and to meet on Swinfield Minnis, a common near Dungeness. "The smiths worked all night to get up arms. About three or four hundred horsemen went from Canterbury, while nearly two thousand men in all mustered at Swinfield." This letter was written about three weeks after the forces of the young Pretender had entered Derby. Miss Talbot, writing in the same month from Cuddesden Palace, says that she had begun to write to her friend, but that reports of the rebels being in full march towards London put her into such a panic that she had not strength to go on. Yet, she adds, "no drums alarm our woods; our farmers pursue their harmless labor without interruption, and all around us looks as if

the island was in a perfect state of peace and tranquillity."

We may conclude with a curious account Mrs. Carter gives of her finding herself by chance in the midst of a crowd gathered, as she thought, to witness an execution. She was passing up Snow Hill on her way to the South Sea House, and found the street unusually crowded. Suddenly she heard the dreadful toll of St. Sepulchre's bell. She did not, she says, well understand the geography of Newgate, and thought if she could push through the postern she should find the coast clear on the other side. But she only got into a yet thicker mob. She had a hundred pounds in her pocket and was in the midst of heat and suffocation. A good-natured man, seeing her difficulty, offered to help her, and managed to get her through. "You will imagine," she writes, "that I expressed a sufficient degree of gratitude to my conductor, which I did in the best language I could find. He replied, 'that all he had done was due to my person, and all he could do was due to my merit.' This high strain of complimentary oratory is really no embellishment of my story, but literally what my hero said." She adds a curious observation: "In the midst of all my perplexities I could not help remarking a singular circumstance in the discourse of the mob, in speaking of the unhappy criminal, that he was to *die* to-day, and I scarcely once heard the expression of his being to be *hanged*. To trace the cause of this delicacy is a good problem for the investigators of human nature." From an account given in the *Gentleman's Magazine* we are inclined to believe that the crowd had assembled to witness, not the execution, but the starting of the procession for Tyburn. On the day she was in the city a merchant, who had once carried on a great trade and had failed for more than 60,000*l.*, was hanged at Tyburn, for forgery. He was not taken from Newgate till half past twelve, "having been indulged by the sheriffs to that late hour in expectation of a reprieve." Sympathy was felt for him, as the prosecutors had held the forged bill for more than a year, and had only informed against him when they had found out that he could not pay them.

There are many other matters of interest in these letters on which we should have liked to touch, had we space at our command.

From The Athenæum.

## LANCASHIRE MEMORIES.\*

THERE is a delightful collection of stories by Mrs. Gaskell which is known by the name of "Round the Sofa." An old lady gets her friends about her, and, before they tell her their adventures, she tells them, evening by evening, the story of her life. One day one of her hearers asks her whether she was born in Edinburgh, for there the group are gathered. "No, I am Lancashire — Liverpool-born," said she, smiling. "Don't you hear it in my broad tongue?" "I hear something different from other people, but I like it because it is just you; is that Lancashire?"

These "Lancashire Memories" recall this scene, and except that Mrs. Potter is Manchester-born, and that her reminiscences are not one single connected story, her readers might fancy that they were gathered "round the sofa," just going to listen to the story of "My Lady Ludlow." For these "Memories" are very pleasant. They have an "old world" flavor which brings back the past, and makes one feel kindly towards her who reproduces it for our amusement. There may be nothing wonderful about them, and the people of whom they speak have been long forgotten; but a gentle humor ripples along, and we get interested while scarcely knowing why.

Mrs. Potter begins by a protest against the assertion of some friend that Lancashire is "a county without country," and in this she is undeniably right, though in the part of Lancashire she knows best the bits of real country, without smoke or chimneys, are becoming rather few and far between. Even her favorite "Riverton," which we know as Rivington, has its lakes formed into reservoirs to provide Liverpool with water, and is no longer merely an out-of-the-way village. But when Mrs. Potter was a child the whole place was different from any other, and full of a character of its own. There was the little cottage, where the old bachelor lived, who loved to fill his rooms with nephews and nieces.

Up-stairs in the holidays they were packed as close as potted shrimps; and sometimes the bachelor himself, being considerably taller than the average height of humanity, would call out, "Are you in your rooms?" in order that he might open his bedroom door, and sleep comfortably with his feet out on the landing.

There was the Hall with its rookery, for

the rook is essentially an aristocratic bird, and the country people say it will only settle in the neighborhood of a good old family.

There was the weather-stained dwelling where lived the two Miss Archers, who spent their whole lives in trying to avoid catching cold.

The linen for the night was put under the cushions of the parlor chairs, and assiduously sat upon during the day, whilst that for the day was safely and warmly accommodated at night under their own pillows.

How like a bit of "Cranford" this is!

There was the red brick house on the green, where lived a widow lady with four or five gay young daughters, who always took their walks in the direction, not of the fields, but of the high road.

They lived there many years; but at length, as the mother significantly observed, "We stay and stay, and nobody comes," they departed for the town, where, it seems, somebody did come, for they married in course of time.

Further on were the church and the little old Presbyterian chapel (Unitarian they would call it now), which were on such good terms of Christian fellowship that each would close its gates when the other had its charity sermon for its schools, so that the whole parish might contribute! Are there many churches and chapels that would do this in these more enlightened days?

Then came Tommy Stone's cottage. Tommy was stonemason and thatcher, and he had some rather smart daughters, who tried to smarten him up also; but their attempts were useless, and they had at last to leave him to himself and to his corduroy breeches and grey worsted stockings.

Lastly, there was the farm where Peggy Baines lived. She was an old maid, and prided herself on her independence, for it's best I han nobody t' please but myself; an' I reckon th' squire thinks so too, or he'd a gettin' wed afore this.

Later chapters tell of people rather than of places, but the description of "my cousins" and their house is charming in its way. The old garden with its summer-house, where "earwigs and spiders are apt to drop on your head," is curiously tempting. More tempting still (and really the story doesn't say much for the early morality of these young ladies: what would their minister have said?) the high

\* *Lancashire Memories*. By Louisa Potter. Macmillan & Co.



fruit wall with its plums, which they were forbidden to gather.

So it was a common practice to saunter gently by, and, with a small stick, knock off a plum in passing, looking quite another way, and in half an hour or so return again and pick it up.

Inside the house was a dusty old book-closet, full of novels and romances, among which "The Mysteries of Udolpho" was a special favorite. Then there were some wonderful pictures, said to be by old masters, of which one, attributed to Rembrandt, was remarkable for an infant Christ with six toes, while another, called "Fame," life-size, with hardly any drapery, used to distress a maiden friend so seriously that she could not be brought to sit opposite to it during dinner.

It would hardly be fair to Mrs. Potter to go through her "Memories" chapter by chapter, and tell all her good stories for her. Here is one of the delightfully droll characters of which the book is full. We half suspect Mrs. Anne must have been a near relation of an old Lancashire lady whom we once knew, and who invariably contradicted anybody and anything. If you congratulated her on a family marriage, she would ask what there was to congratulate about, as so many marriages turned out ill. If you condoled with her on a death, she would observe that most people were much happier out of the world than in it. And so with everything. But now for Mrs. Potter's friend:—

In the memorable small-pox, when she was only six years old, a kind friend came to her bedside, and gently whispered, "Anne, love, I've brought you a bit of gingerbread." "And a bit it is, if you've brought it," was the polite reply. In her last illness, when her half-sister, at much personal inconvenience, came to bid her an affectionate farewell, she was told "it would look better of her to stay with her husband than to come to see her;" and that was pure sourness, for she did not believe in husbands, and held them too cheap to require any attention at all. Some relations once paying her a visit, and prolonging their stay beyond Mrs. Anne's contemplation or wish, were somewhat taken aback one morning, before they were up, by hearing her call out loudly on the stairs, "A fine morning for cousins to go home!"

And now too we know all about Mrs. Weston, "with her overweening preference for those she conceived to be *somebody*," and who showed her devotion to her husband by, at the moment of his death, at once mounting on a chair and stopping the clock! As for the Croker family, we are glad we never really did know them; or spend an evening playing round games with one of those terrible ladies. But Miss Deborah Dickson (she always spelled Dickson with a long *f*; to show that she was no common Dickson) is delightful, and not less delightful old Aunt Dorcas. Aunt Dorcas, who was, as most of these good people seem to have been, afflicted with a passion for what they were pleased, to call "gentility," went to the Presbyterian chapel, but then it was no ordinary chapel, for there was a wooden canopy over one of the pews, and "Lord Hugh Willoughby" had been painted over it by the schoolmaster. This Hugh, Lord Willoughby, must have been one of the Willoughbys of Parham, the last of the old Nonconformist nobility of England, of whom the last representative was educated at the Warrington Academy under Aikin, and Enfield, and Priestley.

The concluding chapters of school life in London are in no sense "Lancashire memories," and detract just a little from the general impression which the rest of the book has left. If Mrs. Potter has other Lancashire stories still untold, can she not substitute them in the new edition for which we may fairly look?

And may we suggest one other alteration? It is likely that Mrs. Potter has never read her Smollett since the days of that dusty book-closet at her cousins', or she would not (at p. 49) so cruelly have garbled Winifred Jenkins's account of the sights of London. What that charming young woman really did see were

the park, and the paleass of St. Gimses, and the king's and the queen's magisterial pursing, and the sweet young princes, and the hillyfents, and the pyebald ass, and all the rest of the royal family.

But Mrs. Potter's little book will give so much pleasure that graver faults than these may well be forgiven.